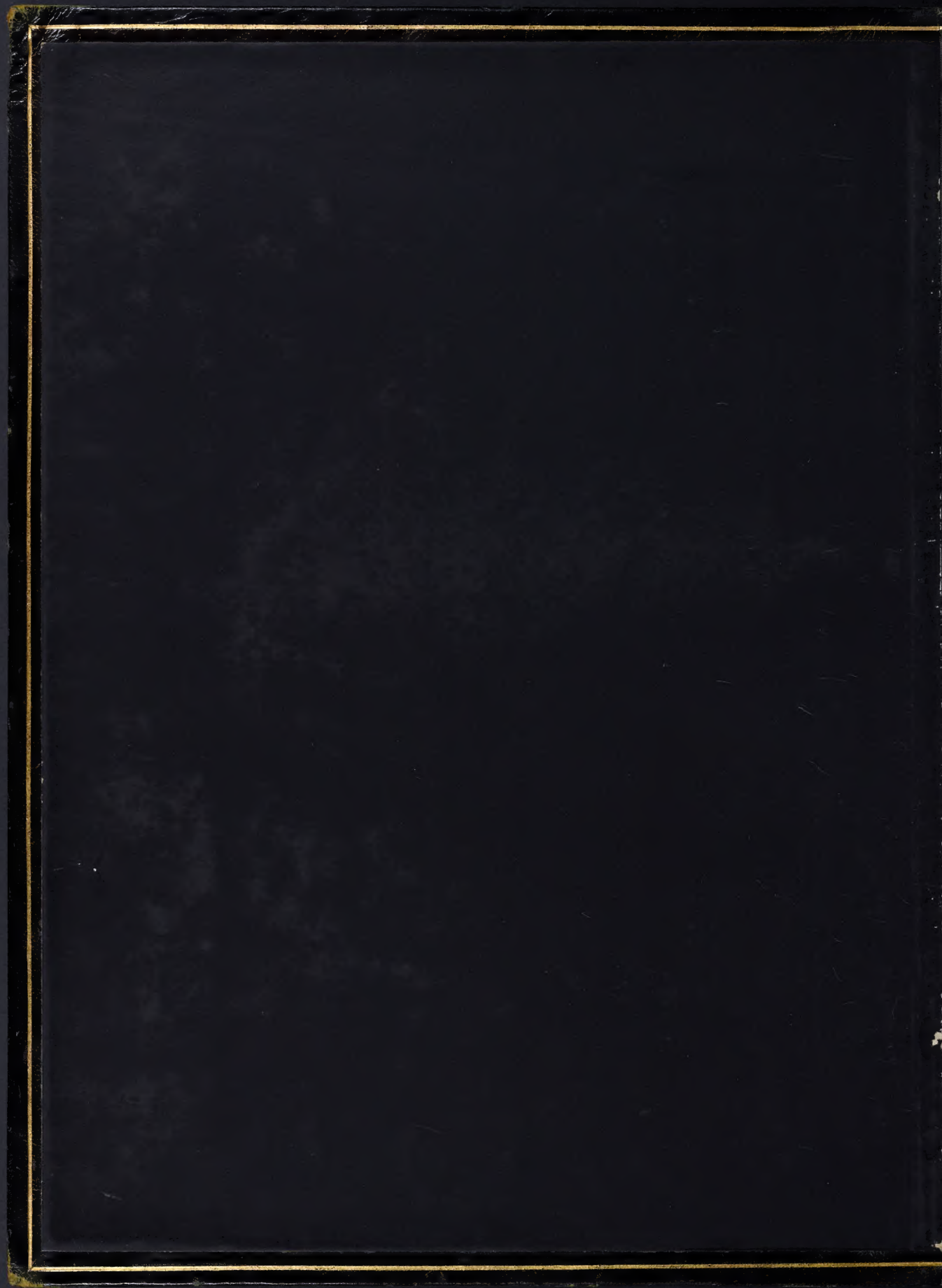
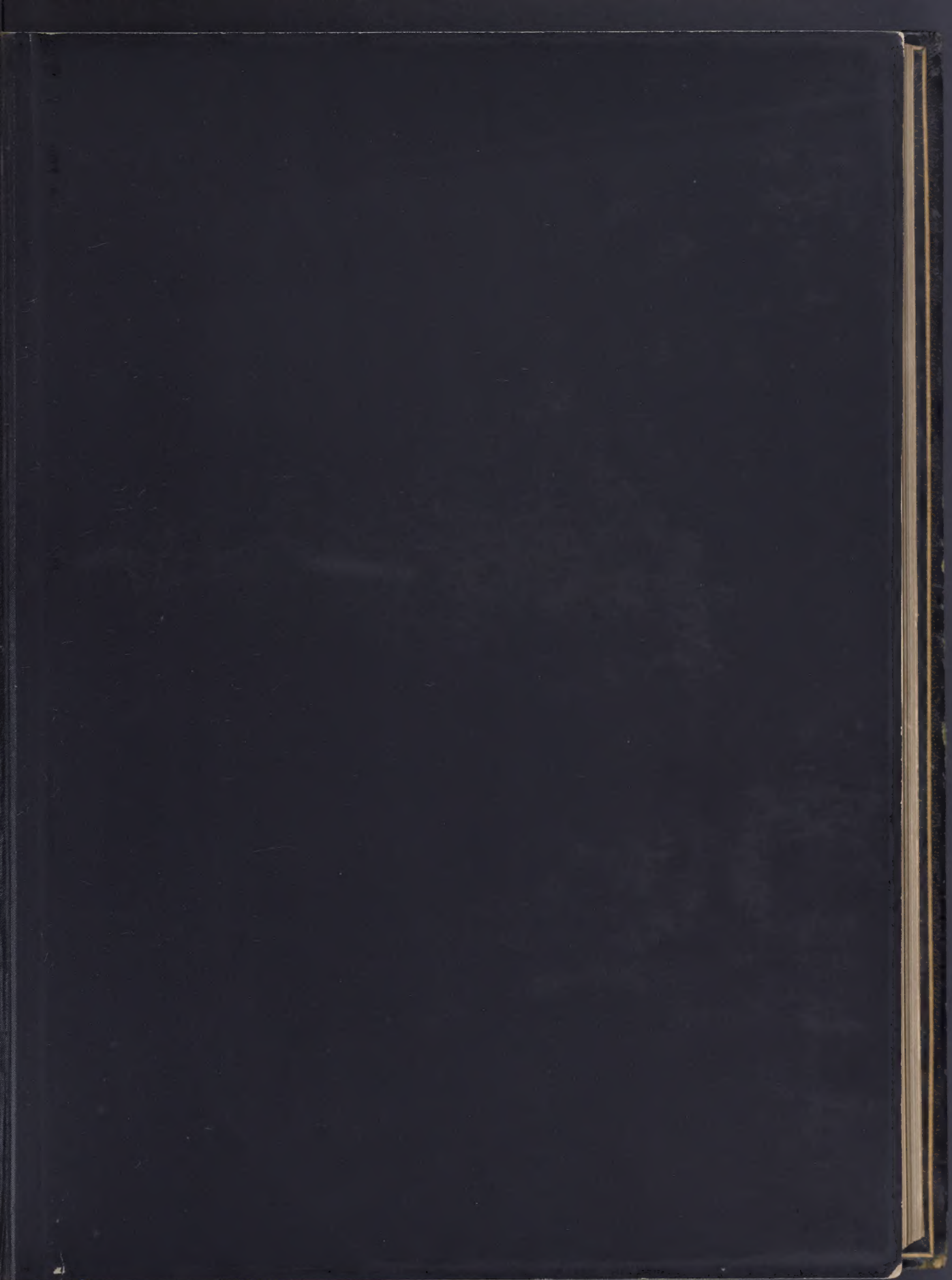
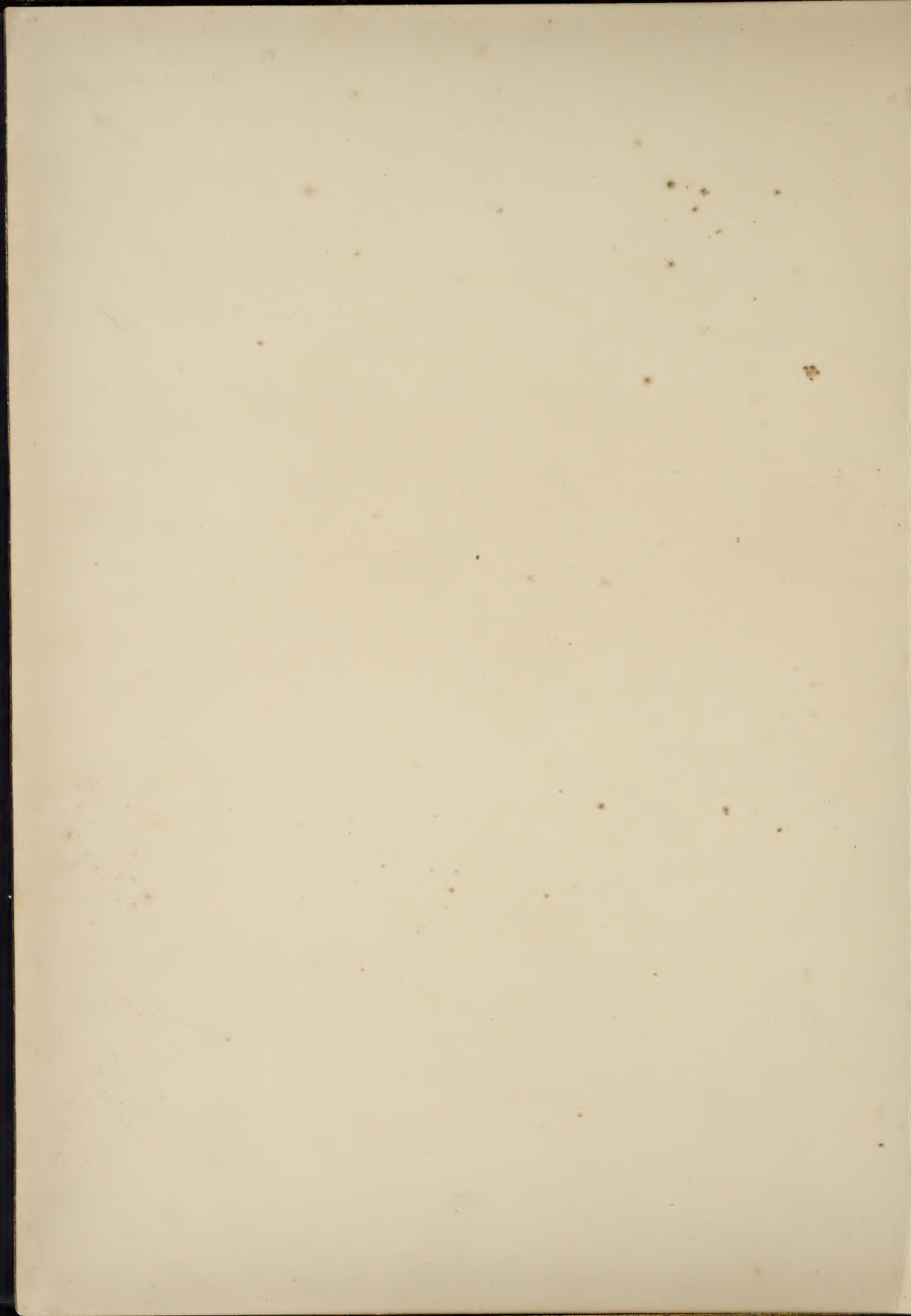




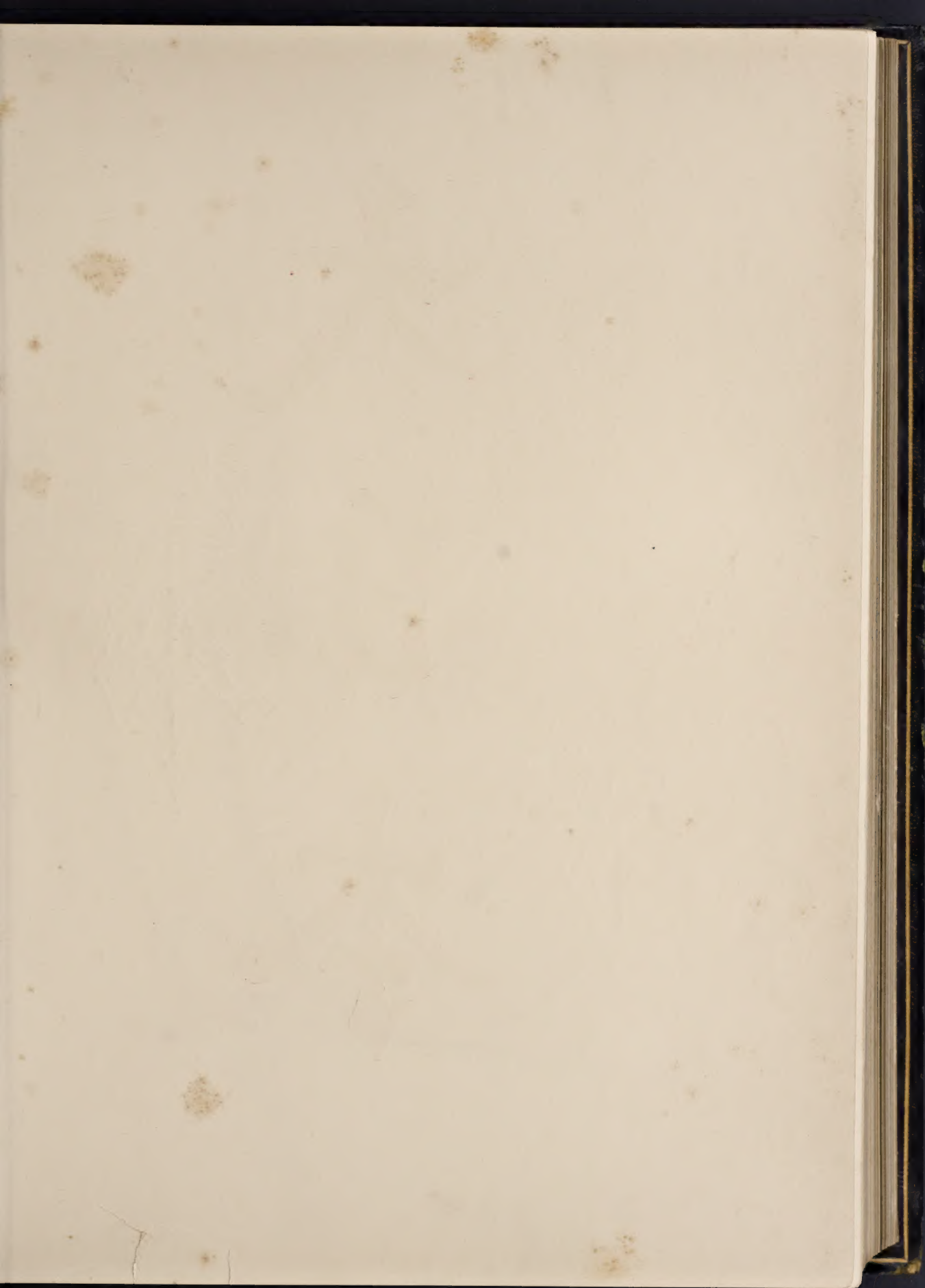
日本妝飾志







THE
ORNAMENTAL
ARTS OF JAPAN



大

日

本



A STUDY Hokusai.



A STUDY-Hokusai.

DAI NIPPON
Great Japan.

THE
ORNAMENTAL
ARTS OF JAPAN

BY
GEORGE ARDOWN AEDSLEY

MEMBER OF THE LONDON INSTITUTE OF ARTISTS AND ARCHITECTS

LECTURER IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

AND IN THE LONDON SOCIETY OF ARTS

大

日

本



THE
ORNAMENTAL
ARTS OF JAPAN

BY
GEORGE ASHDOWN AUDSLEY

FELLOW OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS

MEMBER OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY OF JAPAN

JOINT AUTHOR OF "*KERAMIC ART OF JAPAN*"

AND AUTHOR OF SEVERAL WORKS ON ART

VOLUME I



LONDON

SAMPSON LOW, MARSTON, SEARLE, & RIVINGTON

CROWN BUILDINGS, 188, FLEET STREET, E.C.

MDCCCLXXXII

DEDICATED

BY SPECIAL PERMISSION

TO

THE MOST DISTINGUISHED COLLECTOR AND PATRON

OF

JAPANESE ART

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH, K.G., KT.,

WITH EVERY FEELING OF RESPECT

BY

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

OBEDIENT SERVANT

THE AUTHOR

PREFACE.



IT is not often the good fortune of an author to write the first Preface to his Work after it has passed safely through the fire of Press criticism; but such is my enviable position at this juncture. I cannot but believe that it is due to the beautiful and interesting arts I have endeavoured to illustrate and briefly describe, and the considerate indulgence of my patrons and reviewers, rather than to any artistic and literary ability I may have displayed, that I am able to record with excusable pleasure the almost unparalleled success of *THE ORNAMENTAL ARTS OF JAPAN*.

The courteous reviewer in *The Academy* (January 19, 1884) has remarked:—"It was always to be hoped, if not to be expected, that a work of the same importance as the *Keramic Art of Japan* should be devoted to those other decorative arts in which the Japanese excel rather more than less as compared with pottery and porcelain." I may say, in response, that even before the *Keramic Art of Japan* left the press I had resolved to complete the task thus happily initiated, by

PREFACE.

illustrating and describing, to the best of my ability, all the other and still more interesting art industries of the Japanese. With the well-known business enterprise and untiring zeal and support of my publishers, I have been enabled to place before the public the present Work, of which, in comparing it with the previous book, another reviewer has said:—"Those who possess the *Keramic Art* are not without means of knowing what can be done in this kind, and they will be disposed to satisfy themselves of the simple fact, which we record, that the former Work, great as it was, was only on the road to the elaborate perfection of this."

While on this subject, I must tender my thanks to all my critics for their kind and highly valued words of encouragement; especially to those of *The Times*, *The St. James's Gazette*, *The Pall Mall Gazette*, *The Academy*, *The Illustrated London News*, *The Building News*, *The Scotsman*, and *Liverpool Daily Post*. By all of these my aims and endeavours have been clearly understood, and have been commended, I cannot help fearing, beyond my just deserts.

In the production of *THE ORNAMENTAL ARTS OF JAPAN* it has been my steadfast desire to do all the justice possible, by the most advanced processes of chromolithographic and photographic printing, to the masterpieces of Japanese art, so kindly placed at my disposal by English, French, and American collectors; and in the literary portion to treat rather of the manipulatory processes resorted to by the Japanese artizans in their production, than to fill the space at my disposal with dry historical data, arrived at through devious channels, and always more or less unreliable when reached. After eighteen years of careful study of Japanese art, I am free to admit that a biographical list of names of native artists—names which can have no possible connexion with the art history of the rest of the world—has no special charms for me. On the other hand, a comprehensive knowledge of the art works of Japan, and an acquaintance with the manipulatory processes

PREFACE.

by which they were created, are of absorbing interest and full of valuable lessons and suggestions. These lessons in ornamental design and these suggestions in manufacture may be taken to heart by our decorative artists and artisans with unalloyed advantage. I trust that the laborious task I have undertaken, and now happily completed, may prove to be a not unimportant means of spreading this knowledge.

No one can be more impressed with the manifold shortcomings of the present Work than I am; for it is not too much to say that had its entire series of Plates and every page of its Text been devoted to the treatment of any one of the more important Sections it embraces, much would remain, even in that single art, unillustrated and unexplained. Such being the case, I trust to the indulgence of my readers and the consideration of my critics when they turn over the following leaves.

The great difficulty in an undertaking like the present is not to obtain objects for illustration but to select them. From an enthusiastic collector's point of view I may have altogether failed to make a wise selection, for I certainly have made no attempt at an historical or chronological one; but as my Work is not so directly addressed to him as it is to the artist, artisan, and general art-loving public, his opinion is of secondary importance. To him a chronological list of artists' names, dates, and inscriptions would be of far more interest and fancied value than the most elaborate and accurate description of the mode of manufacture and artistic treatment of the articles made and thought worthy of being signed by the men whose mere names he values. It is certainly always agreeable to know the name of the artist who has left a record of his taste and skill on a lovely work; but the simple knowledge of his name cannot or should not affect our appreciation of the work itself. Pure admiration for a work of art may reasonably engender respect for the name of its maker; and it is this consideration that has induced me to obtain and record, in all possible cases, the names of the artists who have produced the objects illustrated.

PREFACE.

With these few remarks I place my Volumes before the world. I shall indeed be well content if the completed Work wins the good opinions and sustains the reputation already acquired by the separate Parts as they in succession came under the trying ordeal of criticism.

It is now my pleasant duty to acknowledge the good services of all who have contributed to the Plates of this Work, and who have so freely lent me their valuable objects for illustration. Their names are recorded in all cases in the Descriptions of the Plates. My special thanks are due to my friends Ernest Mason Satow, Esq., C.M.G., Late Second Secretary and Japanese Secretary to Her Majesty's Legation in Japan, and William Anderson, Esq., F.R.C.S., for much valuable information and help relative to the arts of Japan; to Mr. Tadamasa Hayashi, the accomplished Japanese expert; and also to Ernest Hart, Esq., F.R.C.S., one of the most enthusiastic and successful collectors of Japanese works of art in Europe; Walter Macfarlane, Esq., Professor Edward S. Morse, and Professor Charles E. West, for assistance in the description of their interesting contributions.

I have great pleasure in acknowledging the help I have received from the writings of John J. Quin, Esq., Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Hakodate, Thomas R. H. M^cClatchie, Esq., and other members of the Asiatic Society of Japan, Sir Rutherford Alcock, K.C.B., D.C.L., Christopher Dresser, Esq., Ph.D., F.L.S., Monsieur Louis Gonse, and other gentlemen whose names are mentioned in the Text.

My best thanks are due to MM. Lemercier, Bauer, Blondet, Dambourgez, Daumont, Dubois, Gaulard, Heidet, Lèvié, Pralon, Sanier, Spiegel, and Teucher, of Paris, and Herr Greve, of Berlin, the artists and printers engaged in the production of the Plates, for their unremitting care and attention in all the details of their art, and for the unwearying display of their patience and skill under my peculiarly exacting supervision.

PREFACE.

And, lastly, I have to acknowledge the important services of Messrs. Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington, without whose enterprising spirit and masterly administration this large and costly enterprise could not have been brought to a satisfactory issue; and to whom, in co-operation with my American publishers, Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons, the commercial success of the Work is mainly due.

G. ASHDOWN AUDSLEY.

Devon Nook, Duke's Avenue,
Chiswick. 1885.



FROM A WOODCUT IN THE *ZENYAKU KOFUSHU*.





TAN-CHŌ.

INTRODUCTION.



F all the countries of the Orient, Japan holds a pre-eminent position in all matters connected with the Ornamental and Decorative Arts; and in several branches of art-manufacture it stands at the head of the civilised world. Japanese Art is, however, now so well known and so widely appreciated in Europe and America, that it is quite unnecessary to enlarge on these facts; everyone who takes any interest in the subject of art-industry is acquainted with the wonderful works in lacquer, ivory, metal, embroidery, enamel, and pottery which have reached us from Japan, and now adorn so many of our public and private collections; and these alone are sufficient to prove the exalted position the Japanese art workmen have held for centuries and still hold at the present time.

It has been the fashion to remark that art and manipulative skill in Japan are things of the past: but investigation with an unprejudiced mind hardly supports this view. Indeed, the careful examination of many examples of work executed during the last few years has convinced us that the art workman of to-day is quite as clever and painstaking as he of two or three centuries ago. Why should he not be, with all the advantages the study of the works of the past gives him? It is questionable if modern science can be included in his advantages;

one thing is certain, it has supplied him with bright and glaring dyes and pigments, which he has, in the interests of commerce, been induced to adopt, frequently to the total suppression of his natural taste. One of the characteristics of the best periods of Japanese Art is a peculiarly quiet and refined scale of colour, in which the harmonies of analogy are generally more marked than the harmonies of contrast. Vivid contrasts are not of frequent occurrence, except for the production of some startling effects; as, for instance, in the embroidery illustrated on Plate II., Section Second, where a bright red sun, with a white crane flying across it, is placed directly upon a light blue ground. Brilliant colours associated with rich gilding are lavishly employed by the Japanese architects in the decoration of temples and shrines; indeed, in the application of brilliant colour, both on plain and carved surfaces, they rival the decorations of the Alhambra. But the amount of shade which of necessity pervades such elaborate and complicated wooden structures as the Japanese temples, exercises an important modifying influence upon the bright colouring and gilding, refining and subduing vivid contrasts, and blending all into a pleasing harmony. The effects of the decorations are ever changing with the changing daylight; salient portions now sparkling in the sunshine, now retiring into shade; and parts buried in deep shadow under the powerful sunshine come forward in rich hues under softer and more diffused light. We may safely state that a careful study of all the departments of decorative art leaves us no alternative but to pass a favourable opinion on the skill of the Japanese colourists; they are unquestionably in advance of all Oriental artists in this respect.

In metallurgy, modern science has taught the Japanese founders nothing; for centuries they have been unapproachable in the composition of bronze and other alloys for ornamental purposes, their skill being only surpassed by that of the artists who wrought them into quaint and expressive pictures; or into sword-guards, vases, perfume burners, domestic utensils, and countless other objects of utility and beauty. The Japanese appear to have been for many centuries acquainted with all the processes of Ornamental Metal Working; and in certain branches have surpassed the artists of all other countries. With great manipulative skill, untiring patience, and consummate taste, they have produced works in the precious metals, upon grounds of iron and bronze, which are unsurpassed, and we may say unsurpassable, as examples of Ornamental or Decorative Art in their own class.

The Japanese have always shown a warm love for the common productions of nature, and have with the greatest ingenuity bent them to their service in the Ornamental Arts. Such materials as finely marked and coloured woods, ivory, mother-of-pearl, tortoiseshell, coral, metallic ores, pure metals, alloys, rock crystal, and coloured stones have one and all been manipulated with most happy results, especially in their Applied and Incrusted Work. To this list must be added the sap of the *Rhus vernicifera*, which plays the most important part in the greatest art industry of the country, being the material from which all the Japanese Lacquer is made.

The conditions under which the old artists and artificers cultivated their special talents were those most favourable to the production of perfect works of art. Living under the protection and in the establishments of the great Daimios, perfectly free from all the cares, and supplied with all the necessities of life, they concentrated every thought and expended the most loving care upon each object they essayed to produce. Time was of no account to them; and their masters were well content to watch the gradual development of ideas, and the tedious processes of manipulation, which were to produce masterpieces never before achieved. It was under such circumstances that all the great artists worked for centuries prior to the suppression of the feudal system; and, in examining their masterpieces, especially those in lacquer and metal work, we can with great difficulty form any idea of the thought, skill, and time expended in their production.

In examining or passing an opinion on a work of Ornamental Art, one cannot well separate the artistic design from the manipulative treatment; and in works of Japanese origin the separation of the two equally important elements is a matter well-nigh impossible; this springs from the fact that the artist and workman are one individual, and that mind and hand go together in all he does. It is true that the artist of to-day works on tradition to a large extent, and adopts the materials and motives for his designs which have been common property for generations; yet, after all, there are evidences, never wanting, which indicate that they have been filtered through his own heart and seen through the window of his own mind.

We are not going to press an opinion that *all* the Japanese artists have done is perfect or even good art, as the term is understood in the West; on the contrary, we will freely admit that their works are full of imperfections and even distortions, especially in the schools of drawing; but yet it must be maintained that in their purely Ornamental and Decorative Art works there are charms of design, quaint beauties of treatment, and immense skill in the graphic delineation of natural objects, so far as the immediate requirements extend, and in the happy use of different materials, which one can find in the corresponding works of no other nation. The peculiar habits and simple modes of life of the Japanese have not favoured the general production of what may be considered important works of art. Their tastes and industry have expended themselves in the formation, in an artistic form, or with elaborate ornamentation, of countless articles of utility—articles of every-day use, suited for all classes of the people. Beyond a few small cabinets, tiers of shelves, low stands, trays, and such like objects, they have no household furniture. Mats cover the floors, and on these they sit during the day and sleep at night. Japanese houses are divided into apartments at will by sliding screens, formed of wood frames covered with paper, patterned, or painted with landscapes, flowers, and birds. Folding screens, either painted or embroidered, are also used. Special works of art in the shape of hanging pictures,

kakemono, are hung up on certain occasions, and help to relieve the extreme simplicity of the apartments. The most talented Japanese artists have produced many of their best drawings in the shape of *kakemono*; and numerous examples of great interest are now in the possession of European and American collectors.

It is a fact worthy of notice that many of the most talented artists which Japan has produced have been satisfied to labour in the humble fields of art industry; and painters and designers of repute have not thought it beneath their dignity to display their manipulative skill and the wealth of their imagination in the adornment of common objects of daily use. Speaking of the "*artisan artist*," Mr. W. Anderson truthfully remarks:—"He is commonly nothing but a copyist, but he is a skilful one, and repeats with the eye of understanding the experiences of form and colour that have accumulated during the preceeding ages: his models, with their absence of light and shade and of strict accuracy of detail, are far less difficult to imitate than would be the more advanced works of the European schools, and, as a trifle supplies him with the necessities of life, his skill may be exercised on the cheapest and simplest objects. But side by side with him we may find labouring diligently over a *netsuke*, colouring a vase or sketching a design for a woodcut, the *inventor*, gifted with talents of a very high order, telling us in his own manner the history or legends of his country, showing quaint touches of his own mother-wit, or putting into form an original observation of some simple oft-repeated motive of a bird or flower. Many such men, even in the present day of money-making, have that artist love of their handicraft which leads them to add patiently, day by day, during months or years, little touches to the slowly growing work that haste or ill-timed devotion would spoil or render tasteless; and when all is done, the price yields him little more than the daily pay of a mason or a tailor, while the crafty middle-man or merchant may grow rich on the skill which is so little profitable to the producer."*

After all, a very careful study of Japanese art throughout its extensive range, inclines us to pronounce the entire family of native artists deficient in purely inventive power. On the other hand, the marvellous patience, highly cultivated manipulative skill, and the happy and lively fancy of the artisan artists of Japan, have led them to improve upon every idea or suggestion they have received from other countries. This fact may be readily proved by the comparison of Japanese and Chinese art works. China, India, and Korea have largely contributed to the foundation of Japanese art; and it is not a difficult matter to trace their influence in the works of all the great periods. Every thought, however, which the Japanese artist has received from these nations, he has invested with a charm and expression peculiarly his own; so, although the origin may be foreign, the work is in treatment and excellence altogether Japanese. Of course no allusion is here made to such works as are simply accurate copies of foreign originals.

* *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*. Vol. VII, 1 370

Honest workmanship is a leading characteristic in all branches of Japanese ornamental art; and in nothing is this more fully exemplified than in the construction and elaborate ornamentation of the temples and shrines which exist in great numbers throughout the country. In these interesting buildings one looks in vain for the slightest evidence of careless or slovenly work; in places which cannot possibly be seen under ordinary circumstances, the carved or painted enrichments, and the ornamental metal-work, are as beautifully and carefully detailed and executed as on those portions which are close to the eye and can be touched by the hand. There is a *greatness* about such loving honesty which cannot be over-estimated, and its influence is stamped upon every genuine art work which has been produced in Japan.

In examining and criticising works of Japanese art, such as are represented in the present treatise, the few hints given in this brief Introduction may with advantage be borne in mind. Much of the misconception relative to Japanese art springs from ignorance of its origin, motives, and manipulative treatment; and objects really worthy of admiration and careful study are often passed over through the simple want of ready appreciation on the part of the observer.



TORA.—FROM A JAPANESE WOODCUT.

SECTION FIRST.

DRAWING, PAINTING,
ENGRAVING, AND
PRINTING.



FROM A WOODCUT BY HOKUSAI.

SECTION FIRST.

DRAWING, PAINTING, ENGRAVING, AND PRINTING.



THE Japanese draughtsman, in his best mood, is essentially a creature of impulse; every sketch he produces, with characteristic rapidity and dexterity, goes to prove this. He is ever alert to catch ideas from what passes before him, and from the humblest objects which surround him; nothing, indeed, seems too simple or too insignificant for his cunning pencil. No sooner has his mind realised an idea which gives it pleasure than it is conveyed, with a few impulsive touches, to paper; and so expressive are these touches, that his sketch seldom fails to convey, in an unmistakable manner, even to a casual observer, the thought which originally gave it birth. His ideas are, however, seldom deep or difficult to define; and with almost child-like *naïveté* he keeps them very near the surface of his sketches. These remarks specially apply to the modern draughtsman, who, since HOKUSAI's time, has almost entirely freed himself from the many Chinese traditions handed down in his art.

Much as we feel ourselves bound to admire, and, indeed, we cannot help admiring, the lovely and graphic drawings of flowers, birds, and insects met with in Japanese art works, we are compelled to admit that the Japanese artist is very unequal in his

powers. The keenness of perception and the fidelity to nature which are so apparent in the class of drawings just alluded to, are, as a rule, sadly deficient in drawings of the human figure, quadrupeds, and scenery. We must not on this account sweep all such works away as valueless or unworthy of study; for it must be borne in mind that all the best Japanese art is decorative, and, as such, is subservient to several rather hard and fast rules—rules which the native artists have intuitively recognised and accepted.

With all its beauties and all its shortcomings, we cannot glance over the wide domain of Japanese art more or less connected with the skill of the draughtsman, without being struck by the loving appreciation of nature it displays. Everywhere are happy ideas, quaint conceits, and lovely objects, which speak of the ardent



FROM AN OLD BLOCK BOOK

student of nature, and of the delight of the artist in her works. As we have said elsewhere, "the Japanese artist is indeed an ardent student of nature; he watches her silent operations with keen perception, and notes her changes of mood and costume with loving eyes, until each detail of her marvellous handiwork, and each expression of her changeful face, becomes imprinted on his mind, to be transferred to every work he sets his hands to do. In the animal and vegetable worlds he is ever watching for expressive action, or seeking for lovely forms and combinations of colour; and when satisfied with his research, how boldly and truthfully he depicts that which has pleased his artistic taste." That Japanese artists appreciate the principle of direct reference to natural objects, such as flowers, grasses, insects, and birds, with the aim of realising their peculiar characters, and of introducing them in their works, we have satisfactory proof in the writings which certain artists have attached to their drawings. A noteworthy instance of this occurs in an

orihon, or folding book, painted by an artist of the name of MASATAMI, between the years A.D. 1804 and 1818 (the period of BUNKWA), and now in the Bowes Collection. In a sort of introduction, the artist tells those who desire to draw flowering plants and beautiful grasses that they cannot do better than study them, so as to realise their natural spirit and habit of growth. He specially desires them to notice whether the branches should be represented drooping or bending upwards; whether the leaves should be drawn thick or thin; whether the flowers should be depicted with their faces or their backs to the eye; and whether their colour should be deep or light; pertinently remarking, "how can we attain perfection unless we study from the real objects." And further on he continues:—



FROM AN INDIAN INK DRAWING

"Whenever I see a flower or a grass, I never fail, in spite of my meagre ability in painting, to copy it out, so that it may serve the purpose of a model in the future."*

Speaking very generally, it is in the delineation of plants, flowers, and grasses that the Japanese artist displays his characteristic tenderness; in his rendering of birds and live fish he displays his keenness of observation and his mastery over action and its power of expression; in the drawing of insects he evinces painstaking accuracy; and in his portrayal of human life he reveals his deep-seated love for the humorous and oftentimes the grotesque. Of course we do not here

* The whole of the *Introduction* alluded to is worthy of attention. A translation from the pen of Mr. Kawakami will be found in *Japanese Marks and Seals*, by James L. Bowes. Liverpool, 1882.

allude to religious subjects, which he can, at will, invest with singular dignity or the extreme of horror. In the rendering of animals he is very unequal; sometimes conveying their characteristics with a masterly ease and certainty, and at others confusing their forms and habits in a cloud of detail. As examples of clever animal drawing we may point to the tiger which forms the tailpiece of our Introduction; and to the cut of two horses on page 2. No one can help being struck with the talent displayed in the latter; and the graphic way in which the graceful actions of the horses are rendered by a few impulsive brush strokes. Legends exist which probably had their origin in the skill evinced by certain early artists in the representation of horses. Two of these legends are thus given by Mr. W. Anderson:—

"Every child in Japan has heard of Kanawoka's horse, painted on a screen in Ninnaji temple near Kiōto: a strange picture, which so far exceeded the limits of mere imitative art, that in the hours of darkness it would quit its frame and gallop wildly through the cultivated land around, till angry peasants, recognising in the matchless form of the mysterious depredator the Kanawoka steed, and finding full confirmation in the damning evidence of the mud that yet clung to its shapely hoofs after its return to pictorial existence, ruthlessly blotted out the eyes of the masterpiece; and thenceforth the nocturnal excursions ceased. A rival horse in the Imperial treasury, a creation of the same brush, was wont to devour the Lespedeza flowers, till by a happy inspiration it was tethered to its panel by a painted rope."

FROM HOKUSAI'S *E-HON TEI-KIN Ō-RAI*.

That several of the later artists have shown, in their own peculiar sketchy style, considerable skill in figure drawing there can be no question; but the almost universal exaggeration found in some form or feature goes far to impair their works. The cut on the previous page, accurately reproduced, by a photographic

process, from an original drawing of the Hokusai school, and probably by one of HOKUSAI's immediate followers, shows, in a simple form, the graphic power and love for exaggeration which characterise much of the work of the advanced school of figure drawing in Japan. The figure subjects from the brush of the greatest of Japanese artists, HOKUSAI, though wonderfully life-like in their action and full of expression, conveying the artist's idea with remarkable directness and force, are all more or less incorrect in their anatomical details; this is particularly to be noticed in his drawing of legs and arms, where the muscular development is either coarsely exaggerated or inaccurately rendered. His fully draped figures, due allowance being made for conventionalism and the peculiarities of the national costume, are in many respects admirable specimens of drawing. The cut on opposite page from HOKUSAI's *E-hon Tei-kin Ōrai*, fairly represents the master's usual manner of treating figures in his *genre* pictures. We shall have more to say on the subject of HOKUSAI's drawings further on.

So far as mere execution is concerned Japanese pictorial art may be divided into two sections; the first comprising works characterised by redundancy of detail and painstaking and laboured execution; the second comprising works in which details are paid but little attention to, and which are characterised by great graphic power and rapidity and freedom of execution. The earlier schools may be said to belong to the first section, the later schools to the second. This, however, is a very general classification and must not be looked upon as defined.

We have no intention of treating the subject of Japanese pictorial art historically or in any exhaustive manner; but it is almost impossible to allude to the several schools of art which have obtained in the country, without entering the domain of history, and without mentioning, in a more or less prominent manner, the great masters who have either founded or adorned those schools. To those of our readers who desire to become thoroughly conversant with the subject of Japanese pictorial art, we have much pleasure in recommending the learned and valuable book written by our friend Mr. William Anderson, entitled *The Pictorial Arts of Japan**—an interesting and exhaustive treatise on the subject both from a historical and a practical point of view.

Native authorities and modern investigations appear to agree in stating that the Japanese derived their knowledge of drawing and painting direct from Chinese artists who visited and settled in the country. The introduction of the art by a Chinese painter is believed to have taken place about the middle of the fifth century; and his descendants appear to have been distinguished artists for some centuries later. In all probability the foundation of the national taste for painting took its rise some time between the sixth and eighth centuries. The introduction of the Buddhist

* *The Pictorial Arts of Japan*, by William Anderson, F.R.C.S., Late Medical Officer to H. M.'s Legation in Japan. Sampson Low & Co., London, 1886.

religion in the sixth century doubtless gave a definite direction to native talent; at least it is tolerably certain that the earliest essays of any note were in the service of religion. At this time there was friendly intercourse with Korea, and the native art in all probability received some inspiration from the works of the Buddhist artists of that country. It is not, however, until the beginning of the tenth century that the historical data of Japanese pictorial art assume any degree of certainty. During the preceding centuries three styles of painting had gradually formed themselves under different sources of inspiration, namely the *Kara-ye*, or Chinese style, the *Kaurai-ye*, or Korean style, and the *Butsu-ye*, or Buddhist style.

We are accustomed to underrate Chinese art, and, indeed, to deny it the possession of any merit; but this opinion of it springs from ignorance of what has been done in the best periods. It is now past a doubt that at the time Chinese art was exerting its greatest influence on the Japanese mind a high standard of excellence had been attained within the limits it had imposed on itself. Speaking on this subject Mr. Anderson remarks:—"The main characteristics of the older Chinese art, almost identical with those of early Japanese art, may be briefly summarised as follows:—*Composition*, nearly always good, though unguided by written laws; the grouping of figures and accessories contributing as far as possible to tell the story of the picture and to please the eye. *Drawing*, almost invariably conventional, except in the representations of monkeys, birds, and certain specimens of vegetable life; the outlines of human figures and of most mammalia incorrect, although the action is commonly truthful and spirited, and the proportions true. *Manipulation*, almost invariably good, constituting, in fact, the most important element in the eyes of the native connoisseur, with whom painting was looked upon as a kind of calligraphy. *Laws of perspective*, unknown, but replaced by strangely perverted rules: thus the landscape painter finds it absolutely necessary to reduce the size of distant objects, but sees no inconsistency in widening the further extremity of any cubical object that may find a place on the picture; again, although he elevates the horizontal line, he draws the foreground from the level of the plain. He has of course no conception of vanishing points. *Colouring*, nearly always tasteful, the Chinese being masterly in the skilful distribution of harmonies and contrasts; the tints are seldom gaudy, and gold is more sparingly used than by the Japanese. Many of the greatest artists preferred to use black ink without intermixture with colour: drawings in silhouette, chiefly representing the bamboo or orchid, are constantly met with, and the rapid ink sketches which are often erroneously supposed to be of Japanese origin are of very ancient date in China. *Chiaroscuro*, entirely omitted, unless a little shading of the folds of garments or beneath the prominent markings of the face can be considered to represent it. Projected shadows are never depicted."

It is easy to trace, from the above clear and accurate *résumé* of the principles and peculiarities of ancient Chinese drawing and painting, the source from which the Japanese artists have derived their chief inspiration, and the models from which those

beautiful and clever drawings so commonly looked upon as essentially and characteristically Japanese, both in conception and manipulation, have been produced. The influence of Chinese pictorial art has not stopped short, for it is quite easy to trace it in the higher walks of Japanese draughtsmanship. We have in our possession a *kakemono*, painted by a Chinese artist, named KIU-JU, in the year 1791, which represents a boy watching the actions of a spider pendent from the branch of a tree. So similar is the general treatment and free manipulation of this painting to Japanese work of a kindred class that few save experts would hesitate a moment in pronouncing it to be from the brush of a Japanese artist.

It is also certain that the Japanese owe the dragon, as they so spiritedly represent it in all departments of their art, entirely to Chinese teaching. A proof of this is furnished by the following Plate, which contains a truly grand rendering of the three-clawed dragon, from a copy by SHUMBOKU—an artist of the Kano school who lived about the close of the seventeenth century—of the original painting by TCHIN-SHOWO, a Chinese master of the Sung dynasty who appears to have painted about the end of the eleventh century. In this representation we find all the characteristics which are usually attributed to the more spirited renderings of the dragon by great Japanese artists. The great HOKUSAI, with all his originality of art thought, did not emancipate himself from this traditional rendering of the dragon. Probably the most celebrated drawings of dragons still preserved in Japan are those which ornament the ceiling of the *yō-meï mon*, or gate to the third court of the mausoleum of IYE-YASU, at Nikkō. These drawings are in Indian-ink, and were executed by KANO MOTONOBU (late fifteenth century), an avowed imitator of Chinese masters of the Sung and Yuen dynasties.* In these renderings of dragons one recognises all the characteristics of the work of TCHIN-SHOWO, as presented in the illustration on the Plate just alluded to. Again, in the clever drawings of the bamboo so frequently met with in Japanese art, Chinese teaching is everywhere apparent. Indeed, it is questionable if even the most advanced essays in this direction by Japanese artists fully equalled the works by the early Chinese masters. The finest painting of bamboos we remember ever having seen was the work of a Chinese artist.

From the foundation of the *Kara-ye riu*, or Chinese school of painting, until the present day, it has been handed down through a continuous chain of talented artists with all its mannerisms and technique intact. For some time it languished while the greater geniuses were espousing the *Butsu-ye riu*, or Buddhist school, but as it directly appealed to the love of nature, ever prominent in the Japanese mind, it ran on through all obstacles, and may be said to obtain in almost its original purity at the present hour. Plates I., III., IV., and XII., give several examples of this school of painting in its late development. The drawing on Plate I. is a highly characteristic example of the school generally so far as the representation of natural

* A representation of one of these drawings is given in *L'Art Japonais* (vol. i., p. 215), where it is attributed to the brush of TANYŪ, an artist of the early part of the seventeenth century.

objects—rocks, foliage, and birds—are concerned. We have before us as we write two late *kakemono* of this school widely different in character. One, belonging to Mr. R. Phené Spiers, in which there is a remarkably spirited rendering of a crane washing itself; above are rocks, a beautiful branch bearing fruit and blossom, and a large red orb, evidently intended for the rising sun. The composition and drawing are good and the colouring vivid. The other *kakemono*, in our own possession, by an artist named To-SERSU (beginning of the present century), presents two figures—a lady and her attendant—wearing costumes richly coloured and most elaborately ornamented with patterns in gold, evincing a reflection of Buddhist art. Behind the figures is a fence of diapered and carved work, such as the great master of architectural sculpture, HIDARI JINGORŌ, might have executed in his happiest moments. Above is a branch of a tree bearing fruit and blossom as usual. The whole is most carefully executed. The figures are Chinese in type and costume. The Chinese school of painting has always held an honoured place in the estimation of Japanese art critics. So far has this been the case, that, as Mr. Anderson remarks, “in the biographical accounts of distinguished Japanese artists we find that the majority avowedly modelled their styles upon the works of one or other of the old Chinese masters, such as Ma Yuen, Mu K’i, Hia Hwui, etc., and native critics can find no higher expression of praise than that implied in a comparison with one of these.”

The greatest Japanese artist of early times was KOSÉ NO KANAWOKA or KANAOKA. This famous master lived and practised his art during the reigns of MONTOKU-TENNŌ (851-858) and SEIWA-TENNŌ (859-876); and it appears to have been at the court of the latter emperor that his fame reached its zenith. He studied under direct Chinese influence if not under Chinese teaching. Being of noble lineage he could command access to all the treasures of art Japan then possessed and could procure for his own edification the works of Chinese or other distant artists. His chief fount of inspiration is said to have been the paintings of WU TAOTSZ’, a renowned Chinese artist of the T’ang period.

KANAWOKA is reputed to have been a most successful delineator of landscapes and horses: his skill as a figure painter is established by the few precious relics of his brush which still exist. We have already alluded to the legend which seems to have originated in his remarkable skill as a painter of horses. No records of his genius are known to exist either in paintings of landscapes or animals; but this cannot be wondered at, for about a thousand years have passed since he laid down his pencil. The few pictures, at all authentic, which exist are of Buddhist subjects. It has been our good fortune to have a favourable opportunity of examining a remarkable *kakemono* by this master, the much envied property of Mr. Wakai, of Tōkiō, the art adviser of H.I.M. the Mikado of Japan. This *kakemono* represents Dzizo, God of Benevolence: a figure of wonderful dignity and refinement, standing erect on clouds, and holding in his hand the sonoris cane. It is painted in colours on silk. No words could do justice to the singular merits of this interesting painting; and one is





FROM A JAPANESE WOODCUT, AFTER THE DRAWING BY SHUMBOKU

lost in wonder at the marvellous perfection of manipulation and perfect harmony of colour presented by such a work, executed more than ten centuries ago. It is said that Fra Angelico never took up his brushes to begin his day's work without first praying for divine inspiration and aid; and the thought forcibly presented itself to us, while we gazed at this masterpiece of early art, that KANAWOKA's pencil was also guided by an inspiration derived from the habit of prayer for special guidance. Truly KANAWOKA was the Fra Angelico of Japan. The most remarkable work attributed to KANAWOKA is a painting of the flame god, Fudō (*Akschava*), in the temple, Dai-yo-ji, at Tōkiō. This painting is remarkable for the grandeur of its conception, and for the force of its drawing and the boldness of its colouring. Although it is not beyond question that KANAWOKA is the painter of this picture, it has been pronounced worthy of his genius. It is quite apparent from the works we have alluded to that this great master studied the Buddhist school as well as the secular school of China; and was, so far as can now be known, the greatest painter of religious subjects of his day in Japan.

Of the descendants and followers of KANAWOKA it is unnecessary to speak: the former appear to have practised the art of the painter to as late as the sixteenth century, while the influence of his work created followers until a much later period. Most of his descendants were noted painters of Buddhist subjects.

Of the *Kaurai-ye riu*, or Korean school of painting, in Japan, one is able to say very little; and that little is of no importance in the present review. It was closely allied to the Chinese school; and so far as its influence on Japanese art is concerned, it may be looked upon as the handmaid of the *Kara-ye riu*.

Of almost equal importance to the *Kara-ye riu* is the *Butsu-ye riu*, or Buddhist school of painting. Speaking of this school, Mr. Anderson remarks:—"The Buddhist style was undoubtedly the first with which Japan made acquaintance, and nearly all the early paintings referred to in the native historical works were of this class. Internal evidence shows that although brought to Japan and taught there by Korean and Chinese painters, its origin is distinct from that of the *Kara-ye* and *Kaurai-ye*. The features given to the pictured deities are not Mongolian in type; the horizontal direction of the fissure between the eyelids, the comparative prominence and the delicate moulding of the nose and chin, and the sensual but well-formed lips unprotruded by prognathous jaws, remind us of the Indian prince, but bear no resemblance to the Chinese mandarin. The colouring, too, in its richness, in its bold contrasts, in the use of bright body pigments, and in the overlaying of garments with scrolls and diapers of gold, recalls the decorative art of India, but offers no points of relationship to the comparatively sober hues of the best schools of Chinese painting. The drawing of Buddhist subjects is strictly conventional, but in the better specimens shows signs in the outline of face, limbs and uncovered portions of the body, of a higher sense of the beauty of natural form than is observable in the secular schools."

As in the Byzantine school of painting in the West, so in the Buddhist school of painting in the East, there obtained traditional rules binding on all disciples of religious art. Originality of conception or treatment was not favoured, if, indeed, it was not looked upon as presumption highly flavoured with profanity. Such being the case it cannot be wondered at that so little variety is to be observed in the vast number of representations of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Dêvas, Arhat, and the hosts of other beings—celestial and infernal—which crowd the Buddhist pantheon. It is much to be regretted that the Japanese artists of the religious school were thus fettered in their treatment of sacred subjects; for had entire freedom been granted them there can be no doubt many remarkable compositions would have enriched the world of art, the joint production of fertile imagination and marvellous powers of delineation. But although tradition fixed forms, attitudes, and attributes for all the beings of the Buddhist pantheon, it left the artists somewhat free in matters of detail, and at liberty to expend their highest manipulative skill in portraying them. The skill displayed by the generality of the Buddhist painters of Japan in all technical matters pertaining to their art is altogether remarkable, their works recalling to the eye the finest illuminated miniatures of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries in Europe. Indeed, in gorgeousness of colouring and in the lavish use of gold the representative *Butsu-ye* (Buddhist picture) far excels the most elaborate works of the Byzantine and Western Gothic schools.

In this rich system of colouring and gilding, as well as in certain mannerisms to be observed in almost every *Butsu-ye*, one can easily recognise the original Indian parentage of the school. There can be no doubt that the Chinese artists derived their models direct from India at a very early period, and that they worked from them with very little modification. Certain details and accessories exclusively Indian were, however, rejected by both the Chinese and Korean artists.

The great Buddhist artists of Japan were, like the mediæval painters and illuminators of Christendom, monks, living apart from the distractions of civil life in the seclusion of their monasteries, and devoting all the time spared them from their religious exercises to the cultivation of an art fully recognised by them as the handmaid of religion. It is interesting to note that the art of the illuminator was cultivated at a very early date in Japan. In Chi-on-In, the chief monastery of the Jo-do sect of Buddhists, at Kiôto, are several remarkable illuminated manuscripts amongst which is a Buddhist *sûtra* in gold characters on dark blue paper having a Buddhist miniature prefixed (early tenth century). As writing has always been looked upon in Japan as a fine art, quite as distinguished as that of painting, it is not a matter for wonder that sumptuous specimens of calligraphy should have been produced and highly valued from the earliest epochs of learning. In the seclusion of their monasteries the Buddhist artists worked lovingly at their temple pictures with untiring patience, painting, as Fra Angelico painted, in the atmosphere of religious fervour and undisturbed faith. Speaking of these devoted artists Mr. Anderson feelingly

remarks:—"The names of many have failed to reach us, as the picture, hallowed by its motive, would have been considered desecrated by the imprint of other characters than those composing prayers, and hence bears no record of the painter [See Plate VII., Section First]. The Buddhist priesthood of the present day appears to receive little reverence in Japan, but it was different in past ages, when books were filled with the lives of holy men who, careless of temporal reward, carried out in self-denial the grand principles that underlie alike the tenets of the Buddhist and the Christian creeds. With many of these the painter's art was a form of prayer, and the devotee would set himself a daily task of industry that left his temple rich in curious works. They appear to have been favoured by extraordinary visions, some of these old artist priests, if we may believe such stories as those related of Shinsai and Teu Densu; and others, equally wonderful, like that which tells how the blazing god Fudō, armed with his two-edged sword and binding rope, appeared to Chishiyō Daishi, that the monk might give to the world a true image of the terrific form of the deity, and how Taigen Miyauwau for the same purpose suddenly manifested his presence to Zhiyāgeu Azhiyari beside the sacred well of Akishino. But the race is nearly ended, and perhaps the last of the true *Butsu-ye* has already left the monastic atelier. Yet even in these degenerate days we may sometimes see remains of the veneration formerly lavished upon such works in the formality and reverence with which the priest takes from the innermost box the treasured Amida, Fudō, or Kwanon, and raises the precious roll to his forehead before he proceeds to display its beauties to the awed or curious visitor; but foreign gold has tempted the more needy or avaricious of the brotherhood to disperse in thousands over the lands of the heretics, the possessions once held too sacred for the unhallowed gaze of common men."

The Buddhist school of painting is strictly of a decorative character, observing all the laws which should govern pictorial embellishment applied to architecture. In the paintings of this school, the flat surface is recognised, neither *chiaroscuro* nor projected shadows being introduced. Of course a slight shading is resorted to to accentuate the folds of drapery and important details, but this frequently extends no further than an increase in the thickness of the defining lines. Whatever the manner of this local shading may be, it does not disturb the flatness of the composition. The painting represented on Plate VII. is a perfectly characteristic example of the *Butsu-ye*. The central figure standing on the Buddhist lotus, supported on pink clouds, is the Bodhisattva of Eternal Benevolence, attended on the right hand by the Dēva king, Bishamon, and on the left by Fudō, the flame god. The original painting is executed in a fine description of body-colour, laid on in the most even manner and subsequently lined with black or dark colours and elaborately ornamented with patterns in gold. The large surfaces of gold as well as the minute ornamentation are produced by fine gold dust attached to the paper by some kind of varnish or size. The entire composition with all its brilliant colouring and gilding is greatly enhanced in

value by the black ground adopted. The thoroughly conventional character of the school is exemplified in this example, as well as its highly decorative nature. In some of the finer paintings, the ground surrounding the central subject is of a deep blue colour enriched with countless fine lines or rays of gold, radiating from the central figure of the composition to the margin of the picture. A very beautiful effect is produced by this decorative treatment, the figures appearing to float in or to be the source of an atmosphere of light. The marvellous delicacy to be observed in the manipulation of Buddhist paintings, and the consummate skill displayed in the laying on of the pigments and gold, must strike every one who examines them in the light of some practical knowledge of the difficulties attending work of the class.

The perfection attained by the Japanese in early times in the preparation of pigments is satisfactorily shown by these paintings; in this respect they resemble the mediæval illuminations of the West, in which we find pigments used of a purity and permanency unknown at the present day. In some remarkable fifteenth century illuminations in our possession there is a class of ornamentation executed in shades of blue so marvellously delicate that it would be hopeless for any one to attempt to reproduce it with the blue pigments now at our disposal. We speak with no little experience of the illuminator's art. In gilding, the Buddhist painters seem to have preferred gold powder to gold leaf, securing by its adoption a rich and refined effect. The powder was in all probability dusted on in the manner followed by the lacquer workers.

So far we have been speaking of what may be considered the more exalted and healthful side of Buddhist art; but we must now turn for a moment to its morbid aspect. A glance at the fearfully conceived and gruesome painting which forms the subject of Plate XIII., will explain what is meant by the morbid side of Buddhist art; a side which seems to have exercised a strange fascination for the followers of the *Butsu-ye riu* in all periods of its existence. There is a curious picture by YŌSAI in the *Zenken Kojitsu* (a Japanese work containing representations of the heroes and remarkable men of the country) in which the artist, KOSÉ NO HIROTAKA, an early descendant of KANAWOKA, is depicted falling backwards, struck with death, while in the act of completing his masterpiece—a large painting of the Buddhist Inferno. The awful character of the composition is graphically indicated in YŌSAI's sketch. The Inferno by KOSÉ NO HIROTAKA is, we understand, still preserved in one of the Japanese Buddhist temples. In addition to the *makimono* illustrated on Plate XIII., we possess a photograph of a large picture of the Buddhist Hell, so complex and horrible in all its details that words, however powerful, would utterly fail in describing it. Where the original is preserved or who the artist is we unfortunately do not know, for as usual it bears no signature.

In the eleventh century the first school of painting which may be correctly called a national one was founded in Japan. This school, known as the *Yamato riu*,

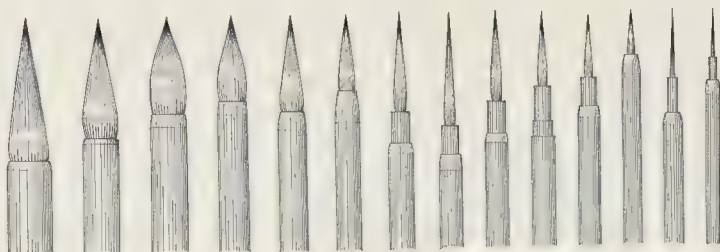
was doubtless led up to by the descendants of the renowned KANAWOKA, although it appears to have, strictly speaking, originated with an artist named FUJIWARA NO MOTO-MITSU, who received lessons in drawing and painting from a descendant of KANAWOKA, called KOSÉ NO KINMOCHI. The following particulars relative to the style of painting established by MOTO-MITSU are given by Mr. Anderson:—"The work of the school was characterised partly by the motives illustrated, and partly by the mode of execution. The subjects most favoured were portraits of the great personages of the court, scenes of ceremony, records of temples, illustrations of the early native romances (of which the *Takatori Monogatari* is the prototype), varied by careful drawings of falcons and horses taken from life, sketches of birds and flowers in the graphic Chinese style, and occasionally burlesques in which the ceremonials and amusements of human existence were mimicked by frogs and other animals or by goblins of the most comically grotesque aspect—a hint which the modern artizan artist has not neglected to utilise. Landscape does not appear to have held as important a position in the list of motives as in later times. It is seldom met with as the subject of a picture, and when appearing as an accessory it is always extremely conventional in treatment and compares very unfavourably with the suggestive representations of mountain, plain, and valley, bequeathed us by the painters of less ancient schools. The drawing was careful and traced with a fine brush, but more formal in style and less vigorous in execution than that of the older Chinese artists. The colouring in typical examples had all the attractions to be derived from a lavish use of gold and bright pigments, but possessed little breadth of effect, and suggested the influence rather of Buddhist than of Chinese example. The perspective was isometrical, but its effect was often varied by the curious practice of omitting the roofs of buildings in order to permit a better display of the incidents of the interior, an expedient which was afterwards adopted by other academies."

This national school continued to flourish during the following century, numbering several distinguished followers. During this period its methods underwent but little change, and its system of illuminated colouring was retained with practically no modification.

In the early half of the thirteenth century the leader of the *Yamato rin* called TOSA TSUNETAKA, a descendant of MOTO-MITSU, reached so great an eminence in his art that he gave his family name to the school which received a fresh impulse and new starting point from his labours. Henceforth the school was distinguished as the *Tosa rin*, or school of Tosa. It retains its individuality and name to the present day.

As the subjects selected by the artists of the school were of a character demanding careful delineation and minute detail the brushes used were generally small and fine, probably identical with those now employed by the Tosa artists. In the following illustration are given, exactly full size, the fourteen brushes of the school as at present supplied. These we have accurately drawn from originals kindly procured for us in Japan by our friend Mr. Ernest Satow. They are carefully formed of different

kinds of hair, all of a strong and springy nature. The hair of the horse and white hare appear to be employed for the larger number. With the smallest brush, which is of black hair, it is possible to draw lines so fine as to be almost invisible to the naked eye. After careful examination and trial we have come to the conclusion that it would be impossible to find a better series of brushes for illuminating after the fashion of the mediæval artists. This is easily accounted for by the fact that much of the work of the Tosa school closely resembles the miniature painting met with in the illuminated manuscripts of the middle ages in Europe. Reference to Plate X, on which is a representation of a very beautiful painting of a crane by a late artist attached to the *Tosa riu*, will show, in another direction, the necessity for the employment of the several brushes here delineated. This work admirably illustrates

BRUSHES USED BY THE ARTISTS OF THE *TOSA RIU* FULL SIZE.

the careful and laboured style of bird painting which owes its origin to the teaching of the Tosa school.

M. Gonse gives so admirable a *résumé* of the *Tosa riu* that we prefer giving it here in preference to any essay of our own.

"Le style de l'école de Tosa occupe une place à part dans l'art japonais; il représente le goût de l'aristocratie, mis à la mode par la cour de Kioto, et personnifié en quelque sorte le style officiel. Il ne doit rien à l'influence chinoise et se caractérise par des procédés patients, par un soin extrême dans l'exécution. Une grande distinction de formes, une finesse précieuse de pinceau, comme celle des miniatures de la Perse, avec lesquelles elle a, du reste, de singuliers rapports de style, une rigueur délicate dans les contours, peu d'invention, un sentiment conventionnel assez étroit, un coloris clair, vif et opaque, une habileté incomparable à peindre avec minutie les objets inanimés, les fleurs et les oiseaux, un amour excessif du détail, tels sont les caractères dominants de cette école. Les peintures de Tosa se reconnaissent aisément entre toutes. J'ai vu des caillies, des paons, des coqs, des branches de cerisiers en fleurs, des bouquets de roses qui auraient fait honneur au pinceau d'Albert Dürer. Les

artistes de cette école, dont les plus distingués furent, ainsi que nous le verrons plus loin, le quatrième descendant de Tsounétaka, Foujivara Mitsounobou, puis Mitsouoki, et enfin Mitsouyoshi, se sont surtout employés, dans les albums, les makimonos et les paravents, à peindre des scènes historiques, les fêtes et les danses de la cour, et à représenter les daimios dans leurs costumes de cérémonie, ces vêtements aux plis doux et harmonieux dont la splendeur décorative ne saurait être surpassée. Ils se servent de pinceaux pointus et bien effilés; ils affectionnent l'emploi des feuilles d'or, dont l'application sur les fonds accentue encore l'éclat un peu aigre de leur coloris. Les paravents de l'école de Tosa, si appréciés à Kioto, ressemblent à de vastes missels à fond d'or. Les plus beaux dessins pour le décor des laques sortent de cet atelier."

Shortly after the establishment of the *Tosa rin* in the thirteenth century a taste for humorous art or caricature was created by the works of an abbot of the temple, Toba no In, near Kiôto, named TOBA SÔJÔ. The love of humour and a taste for fun and frolic appear to have been characteristics of the Japanese from the earliest times; and it is not to be wondered at that a successful delineator of mirth-creating scenes should receive willing admirers and enthusiastic followers. Although this humorous abbot cannot be said to have founded a school, pictures in his style have received the name of *Toba-ye*. TOBA SÔJÔ found many imitators amongst the artists of the recognised schools, for his style was to all intents and purposes an outcome of the Japanese mind, practically uninfluenced by foreign ideas, and peculiarly local in its motives and allusions.

In the *Toba-ye* one meets with all manner of grotesque representations, distortions of the human face and figure, impossible positions and situations, all descriptions of quaint conceits, and, generally speaking, hasty and crude draughtsmanship. No stress appears to have been laid on the quality of the drawing, while everything depended on the quality of the humour and the ingenuity and bizarre invention displayed in the composition. The love for this class of pictorial art has obtained without intermission up to very recent times. The new state of affairs in Japan and the continued intercourse with foreign nations have given what in all probability will prove the death-blow to this extravagant phase of national art. Its decay cannot altogether be regretted, for, in the hands of many artists, the *Toba-ye* became the medium of much grossness, sometimes bordering on the indecent.

In the middle of the fifteenth century appeared SESHÛ, an artist who after acquiring great skill in his own country completed his studies in China. He founded the *Seshû rin*, and had many talented followers, amongst whom were the three acknowledged masters YOMON, TOGAN, and TOYEKI. The latter lived some time in the sixteenth century, and appears to have been a draughtsman of considerable powers. Some idea of his vigorous style may be gathered from the woodcut on

the opposite Plate. It is worthy of note with what few and decided brush strokes the birds have been represented; and the masterly manner in which every characteristic detail has been expressed rather than clearly delineated. All the masters of this school were celebrated for their bold free-hand style of delineation, chiefly in monochrome. Birds, whose plumage offered favourable fields for the exercise of skilful single brush-stroke work, were naturally favourite subjects; and in their simple and expressive treatment offered a decided contrast to the laboured and minutely detailed drawings of the *Tosa rin*, as illustrated by Plate X.

There can be no question that the founder of the *Sesshiū rin* was a man of great natural gifts, for several legendary tales allude to early efforts of his brush; tales which, although they cannot be believed, may be accepted as founded upon some remarkable essays of his youthful genius, sufficiently noteworthy to be treasured in the memories of contemporary artists and handed down with the usual exaggeration. He is reputed to have been pre-eminently skilful in landscape and figure painting, and to have excelled the artists of his day in the portrayal of birds, animals, and flowers. His manner was distinguished by the rapidity and certainty of its brush work; and he appears to have cultivated the habit of doing as much of the subject as possible with one stroke. Effects of any breadth, and details such as leaves, feathers, and the like, were almost invariably done at a single application of the brush, controlled by an unerring but perfectly free hand. About the beginning of the seventeenth century the *Sesshiū rin* appears to have died out. Its decline and death can hardly be wondered at, for perhaps no school of Japanese pictorial art so entirely depended on the skill of the delineator. The artists of the *Sesshiū rin* cultivated colouring to a less extent than those of any other contemporary school, and accordingly their best essays were ineffective in comparison with the richly coloured works of other masters.

The next great star in the firmament of Japanese pictorial art to which we have to allude is KANO MASANOBU, a contemporary of SESSHIŪ, and the nominal founder of what may justly be considered one of the greatest, if not the greatest of all the Japanese schools—the *Kano rin*. MASANOBU studied under several masters of note, and excelled them all in the boldness of his conceptions and the grandeur of his treatment. His masters were followers of the *Kara-ye rin*, his models were paintings of that school and its offshoots, and his natural tastes led him to adopt a kindred class of subjects; such being the case, the *Kano rin* at its inception can only be classed as a development of the Chinese school. Besides painting *kakemono* and other portable pictures MASANOBU appears to have executed works of purely decorative art. In the temple, Kin-kaku-ji, at Kiōto, is a ceiling painted with *ten-nin* (mythological female figures playing musical instruments), and a border of conventionalised birds and flowers. The painting, executed on a gold ground, is now in a very decayed state. As Mr. Satow justly remarks:—"The decoration of this ceiling was executed





FROM A JAPANESE WOODBUT, AFTER THE ORIGINAL DRAWING BY TŌIKI XVI CENTURY.

after it had been put up, rather an uncommon achievement for a Japanese artist." MASANOBU died in the early years of the sixteenth century, leaving his son, KANO MOTONOBU (born in 1476), the real founder of the *Kano riu*.

The name of this great artist has ever been held in the highest veneration by all the art lovers in Japan. Speaking of him Mr. Anderson remarks:—"For many years of his early career he worked in relative poverty and obscurity, but at length rose into notice, and soon achieved a reputation unsurpassed even by that of Kose no Kanaoka. He was an avowed imitator of certain Chinese masters of the Sung and Yuen dynasties, and like Sesshiū and Shiūbun adopted his motives almost entirely from Chinese sources, expending extraordinary powers of composition and manipulation in the delineation of scenery and personages that for him existed only in imagination or in the works of others. The Kano school nevertheless became the most important in Japan, and held its pre-eminence for nearly three centuries after the death of its true founder in 1559.

"The Sesshiū, Kano, and Chinese academies must be regarded as three branches of the revived Chinese school. Although distinguished from each other by minor details of manipulation, their style was essentially the same, and was characterised by a quiet and harmonious colouring, and by a bold caligraphic drawing in which little attention was paid to naturalistic details. The favourite motives were almost always classical, consisting of portraits of Chinese sages or Buddhist saints, sketches of birds and flowers after the manner and often from the works of the Chinese masters, and Chinese landscape, of which most of the artists were cognizant only through the paintings imported from the Middle Kingdom. By exception the subjects were drawn from native scenery, the Peerless Mountain especially possessing all the sanctity of a classical inspiration [see Plate V.]; but it may safely be asserted that not one in twenty of the productions of these painters, who to the present day are considered to represent the true genius of Japanese art, was inspired by the works of nature as seen in their own beautiful country."

Numerous examples of MOTONOBU's skill are still extant in the temples of Japan and in private possession. In the temple, Nin-na-ji, at Kiōto, are several wall panels and sliding screens, painted with Chinese scenes upon gold grounds; in the oratory of the temple, Tō-no-mine, near Oiwake, are portraits of the "Thirty-six Poets"; in the temple, Tō-ji, at Kiōto, are a pair of screens on which are depicted scenes from the wars between the Taira and Minamoto clans in the twelfth century; in the *Butsuden* of the temple, Ken-chō-ji, near Yokohama, the ceiling is painted with *hōwō* (mythical birds) on a gold ground; in the temple, Chi-on-In, at Kiōto, are a pair of wooden doors excellently painted with geese; here also is a characteristic painting of a cat, highly esteemed by the Japanese because it appears to face the spectator from whatever point he views it; in the monastery, Sei-ken-ji, at Okitsu, is a screen cleverly painted with willows and maple trees; and in the *yō-meï mon* of the mausoleum of IYE-YASU, at Nikkō, the ceiling is decorated with Indian-ink drawings

of ascending and descending dragons, as already mentioned. In the Hart collection is a painting of a Buddhist ascetic by MOTONOBU, a highly characteristic work of the master.

As will be observed from the above short list of MOTONOBU's works, the range of the master's brush was very great; indeed, it appears to have embraced all classes of painting from sketches remarkable for their graphic force and simplicity of treatment to the most elaborately coloured and delicately manipulated pictures. He was also a decorative artist of great originality and power. It is probable that no successor in the *Kano riu* equalled the founder in the versatility and certainty of his technique; at least, no name which subsequently became renowned appears to have eclipsed that of MOTONOBU.

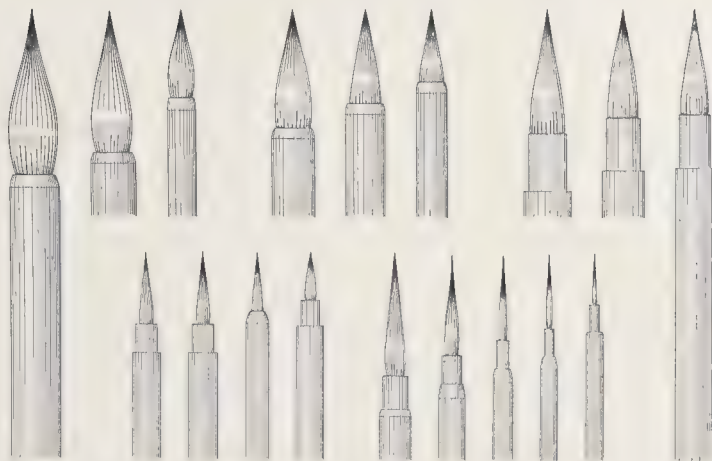
The *Kano riu* had many remarkable masters in the descendants of the founder and their pupils, amongst which are the famous names of EI-ROKU, the painter of the decorations of birds and cherry trees on gold grounds in the first room of the *Tsune Go-ten*, or apartments of the prince of Nin-na-ji, in the monastery, Omuro Go-sho, at Kiôto; SAN-RAKU, the painter of Chinese sages and scenes in the same suite of apartments; TAN-YÛ, the painter of several fine sliding screens decorated with cranes, peonies, and bamboos on gold grounds, in the above named monastery, and many other interesting works in different temples in Japan; and YASU-NOBU, the painter of the immense *kakemono* of the Death of Buddha, in the temple, Go-koku-ji, at Koishikawa, Tôkiô.

The great range of the subjects, and the different modes of representation, both in monochrome and varied colouring, adopted by the artists of the *Kano riu*, compelled the use of a large assortment of brushes. We give, on the opposite page, accurate drawings of the complete set as supplied to modern artists of the school. The five flat brushes represented in the upper row are so large that we have been compelled to represent them one half the full size. The largest brush measures $3\frac{1}{2}$ inches in width. These brushes appear to be formed of deers' hair, firmly stitched into thin pine handles, split at their broad ends to receive the cut end of the hair, previously bound and cemented into a firm band. These brushes are used for producing graduated effects of colour and for laying on broad washes. The round brushes represented in the two lower rows are exactly the size of the originals now lying before us. They are chiefly formed of horses', deers', and white hares' hair, inserted in handles of bamboo. When a collection of drawings of the Kano school is examined it is not difficult to trace the operations of the different classes of brushes here illustrated; but it is not possible to describe the operations in words without a very exhaustive series of illustrations, carefully selected and reproduced for the purpose. The following interesting account of Japanese artists at work, from Mr. Dresser's pen, may, however, convey some idea of how such apparently unwieldy brushes as those of the Kano artists are manipulated. The description is in itself most graphic and interesting, so we need not apologise for the length of the quotation.

Mr. Dresser says:—"Hearing that Mr. Sano had prepared a great treat for me, asking five of the greatest artists of Japan to his house for the purpose of making



BRUSHES USED BY THE ARTISTS OF THE KANO SCHOOL HALF FULL SIZE.



BRUSHES USED BY THE ARTISTS OF THE KANO SCHOOL FULL SIZE.

sketches, Sir Harry and Lady Parkes, Mr. and Mrs. Mounsey, and Mr. Crossley, expressed a wish to be present. Mr. Sano kindly assented.

"The room in which we assembled to see the artists is of considerable size, and is one of those which Mr. Sano has not furnished in the European manner. The artists kneel upon the floor, which is covered with mats, as is usual in a Japanese house. On the centre of the floor is spread a piece of red felt, on which, held down

by weights, rests a sheet of paper, which is smooth and yet of a somewhat bibulous character. The tools of each artist are a small piece of charcoal held in a light bamboo porte-crayon, about fourteen inches long and very slender; flat brushes formed of deers' hair, varying in width from three inches to one inch and three-quarters, while the hairs protrude from the socket about three-quarters or seven-eighths of an inch, round brushes in bamboo, and formed of white vegetable fibres [*], and about half an inch in diameter, plenty of water in a large bowl, Indian-ink with its accompanying slab, and a few colours.

"There is one old flower-painter in whom I ultimately became much interested, for he is full of innocent humour, and his ability as an artist seems as great as his fun. His colours are Indian-ink, indigo, gamboge, crimson lake, and red earth. One of the other artists includes in his pigments a kind of dragon's-blood colour. The artist who is to paint first comes forward, bows in Japanese fashion, and takes his place in front of the paper. He is an elderly gentleman, and after having looked thoughtfully at the paper for a minute or two, begins his work. Taking the porte-crayon, he touches the paper with the charcoal point at four or five places, so as just to leave a perceptible dot; and then with his flat brush three inches broad, charged with Indian-ink, makes on the paper, by an almost instantaneous dash, a large irregular mass of gray-black colour. With a smaller brush he now indicates, in close proximity to the gray mass, what appear to be a few feathers, next, at a little distance, the end of a pendent branch. Then, beginning at the top of the paper, he works the branch downwards till it is in the line of the end which was first drawn. Now an eye is drawn, then a bill, then come a few bits of colour, and we see completed, in less than fifteen minutes, a cock and hen picking in front of a branch of a tree, and, curiously, a great portion of the white body of the hen is rather indicated than drawn; for as the body of the cock is gray (being the large mass of this colour which was first placed upon the paper), and as the white hen is seen against the black cock, the stopping of the black gives the form of a great portion of the hen's body.†

"The old flower-painter, of whom I have before spoken, now took his place before the paper, and after looking at it as though he were picturing in his own mind a group of flowers already painted, made, like the former artist, two or three dots with the charcoal upon the paper, and filling a brush with some green pigment, began by forming here and there certain peony leaves—one leaflet at a touch; but although from time to time he somewhat varied the colour in the brush, no two parts of the same leaflet differed in tint. With another brush he formed a red peony flower,—shading each leaf by a dexterous application of a little water to the paper

* In all our large collection of brushes belonging to the various schools of painting in Japan we are unable to find one formed of vegetable fibre; all the brushes are of animal hair.—G. A. A.

† If the reader will look back to the Plate on which are the cock, hen, and chickens, by TÔVEKI, he will observe an instance of this treatment in the chicken against the hen's body.

before the red was wholly absorbed. Rolling up the paper at the bottom (a practice which all the artists adopt when they wish to work at the upper part of the sheet), he draws petals of an unfolded bud. Now with faint Indian-ink he forms both flowers and buds of the magnolia, then he arranges pink petals into groups, resembling the flowers of the almond, and afterwards forms clusters of red masses, so that they ultimately appear as the peeping petals of red flower buds. The masses of colour being thus carefully distributed with due regard to the laws of composition, the stalks are so drawn that all the isolated parts are brought together with marvellous skill. Then the calyces are added, after which comes a little touching-up, as the formation of veins in a few leaves, the addition of certain bits of pure colour, and a spot of dark here and there.

"A young lady, who is, I understand, a flower-painter to the Empress, now made a sketch of a little yellow flower allied to our winter aconite, but it appears as though just bought in the market, for the root is tied up in a bit of paper. This sketch took the lady about ten minutes to complete. She was followed by a young man who made a drawing of a flying duck, which is 'worked' much in the manner of the first sketch; but the skill with which the body, with its light, shade, and outline, was managed, was truly marvellous. A brush of considerable breadth was dipped in water and drawn between the fingers of the artist till nearly dry. It was then dipped in a thin wash of Indian-ink, the central portion of the brush being bent outwards, so that the hairs of the brush assumed a crescent-like form. The convex or centre portion was now hastily dipped into dark Indian-ink, and the brush was allowed to straighten itself. Two or three hairs were now separated from one side and dipped into dark ink, but these remained detached from the other part of the brush. By a dexterous movement the artist produced with one stroke the shaded body of the duck and an outline, the few separate hairs making the latter, while the shading resulted from the darker ink of the centre not having fully spread to the sides of the brush. A bill is now drawn, then feet, and then tail-feathers. An eye is added, then follows a neck, legs, and a few finishing touches, when an admirable sketch of a flying duck is before us.

"After two or three other drawings are made the middle-aged man, who painted the domestic fowls, kneels again in front of the baize, and begins what we all take to be a sea-piece, which he is drawing simply in Indian-ink. Like the last artist, this gentleman produces a tint and an outline at the same time, and by the same method. After what we take to be waves are finished, and, when we expect the artist to place in the water fish, or upon it junks, he simply adds a few dots and dark touches, and signs his name. It is now held up to view, when, to our astonishment, the sketch is that of a train of rats, with one or two members of the party straying from the others. What we took to be waves proves only to be a background, against which the rounded backs of white rats appear;—the uncoloured paper forming the animals."

From the above graphic description the methods of using the broad flat brushes

of the Kano school can be readily understood; and, although the brushes appear unwieldy and would prove extremely awkward in our hands, they are absolutely necessary for the production of many of the rapidly and powerfully drawn subjects held in high estimation by Japanese connoisseurs. We have in our possession a folding book by YEI-SHO, who painted at Kiôto about the close of the last century, devoted to drawings of bamboos only. It contains forty-eight powerful and spirited double-page sketches, executed with a masterly freedom of touch. In one of these there is a stem of bamboo, nearly 4 inches in diameter, drawn completely across the page. This is beautifully shaded and has one joint depicted; yet it has evidently been executed by only two brush strokes, one ending and the other beginning at



A PAINTER AT WORK FROM HOKUSAI'S *FIFTY-SEVEN VIEWS OF MOUNT FUJI*.

the joint. To produce this stem a brush similar to the largest flat brush shown on page 19 must have been used, skilfully charged with graduated Indian-ink. On another page of the book is a stem of a green tint shaded with Indian-ink, produced by a flat brush first dipped in a green wash and then partly charged with ink of different degrees of strength.

Many stories are told of the marvellous skill of the Japanese artists in using the brush, or sometimes two or more brushes at the same time. The above drawing, by the great HOKUSAI, shows an artist painting a screen with two brushes held in one hand, and both apparently being used at the same instant. One of his friends seems to be watching his manipulation with great interest, while the other is having his joke. The painter appears to be absorbed in his work, as well he may

be with double brushes to demand his attention. We have an illustration in a native book which shows an artist seated upon a stool, opposite a screen, which he is painting with no fewer than five brushes, one held in each hand, one in each foot, and one in his mouth. This we presume is intended to caricature those artists who attempt extravagant modes of painting.

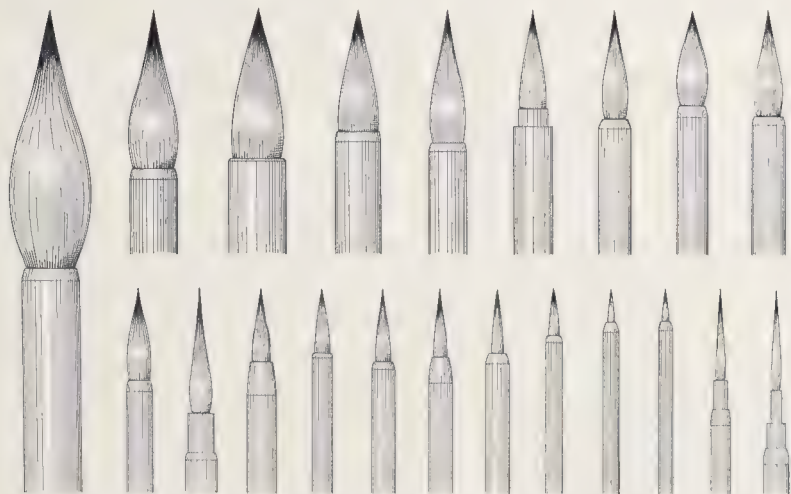
Long practice in drawing and painting has frequently produced wonderful certainty and delicacy of hand; so much so, that when an artist is asked, on the spur of the moment, for a sketch, he will probably not disturb himself much about the shape or quality of the brush which comes readiest to his hand; and perhaps, if the whim strikes him, he will dispense with a brush altogether. One instance of this was some time ago brought before our notice by a traveller who had visited Japan. On one occasion he had the pleasure of observing a screen painter at work in his studio, which consisted of a portion of the house, screened off from the rest by his own finished productions, but open to the street; being struck with his great freedom of hand he requested him, through his interpreter, to draw a bunch of grapes. This subject was given as a difficult task and severe test of skill, for the traveller had in his mind the laboured works of the artists of his own country, and naturally expected that, from the time required to depict the fruit, the artist would laugh and shake his head. Judge of his surprise when the artist seized a piece of paper, and, dipping the point of his thumb into a dish of Indian-ink, proceeded to make a number of softly shaded crescent-like forms close together. Thinking that he must have been misunderstood, but saying nothing, he watched with growing interest the rapid movements of his artistic friend. The crescent forms being finished, his first finger and thumb were together dipped into the ink and transferred to the paper, and with a few rapid movements produced two shaded forms of irregular outline. With his thumb nail, dipped into another slab containing dark ink, he added a few decided lines and sundry other trifling touches, and politely handed the traveller the finished sketch, which was found, when turned round, to display a bunch of plump round grapes with leaves and stalks complete.

In the closing years of the sixteenth century a new school of painting took its rise in the works of IWASA MATAHEI, a pupil of the *Tosa riu*. He appears to have been the first notable sketcher of popular or every-day subjects. These sketches are known as *ukiyo-ye*. He was also a clever caricaturist, although his style can only be imperfectly known by some roughly executed caricatures, produced at Ōtsu near Kiōto and known as *Ōtsu-ye* (Ōtsu pictures), which are said to have had their origin in his works. It was not, however, until about a century after MATAHEI's death that this strictly native school was really established by an artist named HISHIGAWA MORONOBU, best known to fame as the illustrator of numerous books. The firm establishment of the Popular school was materially aided by the artistic labours of another contemporary artist named HANABUSA ITCHŌ, said to have been a pupil of the *Kano riu*.

His works were varied in character, and became extremely popular from their new and amusing class of subjects and the novel manner of their treatment. He does not appear, like his contemporary MORONOBU, to have drawn for the then rapidly developing art of the wood engraver. Towards the close of the seventeenth century a great light in the Popular school arose in the person of RITSUÔ, an artist of varied accomplishments. Apart from being a painter, he was a sculptor of note (see Description of Plate VIII., Section Eighth) and a master of the first rank in incrust-work (see page 43, Section Fourth). All subsequent artists of this school appear to have followed the example of the founder in chiefly devoting their talents to the preparation of drawings for wood engraving; and as these drawings were invariably destroyed in the process of engraving, original works of the class are very rarely to be met with. Only those sketches exist which, for some reason, have not been considered worthy of reproduction. On Plate II. is given a reproduction, on a small scale, of a very beautiful *kakemono* by MIYAGAWA CHOSHUN, a distinguished artist of the school of MATAHEI, who painted in the early part of the eighteenth century (see Description attending the Plate). The Popular school went on in the even tenor of its way until it was lost in its development into the great Artizan school which took place at the close of the last century.

In the seventeenth century arose the noted *Kōrin riu*, founded by OGATA KŌRIN, an artist of remarkable originality. He was a painter, as proved by numerous fine examples of his brush still in existence; a decorative artist and designer, as proved by the interesting work entitled *Kōrin Shinsen hiaku-dzu* (A new series of a hundred designs by KŌRIN), in which are to be found beautiful designs for lacquer (see page 44, Section Fourth), embroidery (see pages 4, 5, Section Second), screen and fan decoration, etc.; a worker in raised gold and incrust lacquer of the first rank (see page 41, and Plate XI. with Description, Section Fourth). From the varied acquirements and style of this talented artist it is to be presumed that he studied under more than one contemporary master. His creations, however, bear the unmistakable stamp of originality; both in his style of drawing and system of colouring he departed from the recognised methods which obtained in the Tosa and Kano schools. In lacquer his boldness and originality of treatment and design are truly remarkable. On looking at such a piece as that illustrated on Plate XI., Section Fourth, one involuntarily remarks, no one but KŌRIN could have conceived this. Speaking of this masterly decorative artist, M. Gonse says—"Kōrin, dont je viens de prononcer le nom comme laqueur, est peut-être le plus original et le plus personnel des peintres du Nippon, le plus Japonais des Japonais. Son style ne ressemble à aucun autre et désorienté au premier abord l'œil des Européens. Il semble à l'antipode de notre goût et de nos habitudes. C'est le comble de l'impressionnisme, du moins, entendons-nous, de l'impressionnisme d'aspect, car son exécution est fondue, légère et lisse; son coup de pinceau est étonnamment souple,

sinueux et tranquille. Le dessin de Kōrin est toujours étrange et imprévu; ses motifs, bien à lui et uniques dans l'art Japonais, ont une naïveté un peu gauche qui vous surprend; mais on s'y habitue vite, et, si l'on fait quelque effort pour se placer au point de vue de l'esthétique japonaise, on finit par leur trouver un charme et une saveur inexprimables, je ne sais quel rythme harmonieux et flottant qui vous enlace. Sous des apparences souvent enfantines, on découvre une science merveilleuse de la forme, une sûreté de synthèse que personne n'a possédée au même degré dans l'art japonais et qui est essentiellement favorable aux combinaisons de l'art décoratif. Cette souplesse ondoyante des contours qui, dans ses dernières œuvres, arrondit tous les angles du dessin vous séduit bientôt par son étrangeté même. . . . Kōrin est né



BRUSHES USED BY THE KŌRIN. ETC. FULL SIZE

à Kioto, en 1661, d'une famille bourgeoise du nom d'Ogata. Son premier maître fut, dit-on, Tsounénobou Kano; il entra ensuite à l'école de Tosa et étudia enfin dans la maison de laqueurs fondée par Kōetsu; mais c'est peut-être dans l'étude des esquisses de Shiokouado qu'il trouva sa voie définitive. Il quitta Kioto assez jeune et se fixa à Yédo. Il revint plus tard dans sa ville natale et y mourut en 1716 à l'âge de cinquante-six ans."

All KŌRIN's works must be considered from a certain standpoint; they are works of decorative art *par excellence*. Perhaps it is not too much to say that no one can fully appreciate the genius of the master who has not a knowledge of the laws which govern decorative art, and a keen appreciation of the skill which bends those laws to its varied purpose. KŌRIN's designs have never fallen to the ground;

on the contrary, it may safely be said that much that is striking and excellent in Japanese art of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would not have existed had it not been for the genius and labours of this original artist. His school languished after his death, for he appears to have been immediately succeeded by no one worthy to lift the brushes which fell from his dying fingers; but in the commencement of the present century special attention was directed to his works, and the school was resuscitated, exerting a decided influence on native decorative art. The illustration on the preceding page shows, full size, all the brushes used by the students of the *Kōrin riu* during the present century. No brush of the broad, flat form adopted by the *Kano riu* appears in the collection; all the brushes are round and mounted in bamboo handles. The hairs used in their formation appear to be chiefly those from the body of the horse, the deer, and the white hare. The great range in the size of the brushes admits of both extremely bold and very minute work being executed by their aid.

In the Hart collection is a very beautiful *kakemono* by KORIN, which is highly characteristic of his decorative style. It presents branches of the tree-peony (*botan*) with flowers and leaves, executed in thin body colours, without any attempt at shading. The flowers have their petals indicated by bold outlines only, and the leaves are simply outlined and veined. The design is treated so strictly within the canons of decorative art that it might be repeated as a wall decoration.

Towards the end of the last century arose the *Shijō riu*—the naturalistic school of painting founded by a talented artist named MARUYAMA OKIO. The school took its title from the street in which OKIO painted. The founder and his pupils advocated the practice of painting directly from nature; and carried their teaching so far in their own labours as could be expected from men previously impressed with the methods of the established schools of the country. Talented as OKIO was, and firmly impressed as both he and his immediate disciples were with the truth of their principles, the early productions of the school were little more than bold compromises. Perhaps the opposition with which the innovations were at the outset received prevented a more radical departure from the old and highly favoured methods. In the works of the school, especially at its inception, a decided leaning to ancient Chinese principles is apparent; this is most obvious in the direction of perspective and *chiaroscuro*. In copying directly from natural objects, as the artists unquestionably did on all possible occasions, it is a matter of no little surprise that they did not see the fallacy of the old ideas on perspective, and at once recognise the necessity for a careful study of all matters relating to light and shade. In nearly all other directions, however, the paintings of the *Shijō riu* show a decided advance on those of all contemporary academies of earlier origin. In manipulation they present a freedom of touch and a delicacy of manner which, combined with the results achieved by an emancipation from the chains of purely conventional principles, gave

them at once a position superior to the works of the traditional Chinese school. The subjects which were more directly affected by ŌKIO's teaching were landscapes, flowers, and animals. In all these, the accuracy secured by a reference to nature was evident from the first, and no doubt went far to win supporters to the school.

The most noted pupils of the *Shijō rin* were RŌ-SETSU; SHIŪ-HO, a skilful delineator of animals; SO-SEN, the celebrated painter of monkeys (see Description of Plate VIII.); IPPŌ, a famous drawer of birds; and YŌSAI, probably the most versatile and original of all the followers of the school. KIKUCHI YŌSAI is best known to European students as the author of the *Zenken Kojitsu*, a work in twenty volumes containing representations of the noted historical personages of Japan who have lived between the years 660 B.C. and 1300 A.D., compiled from four hundred different authorities. The cut printed at the end of our Preface is a reproduction from one of the engravings in the work alluded to. The remarks on YŌSAI made by M. Gonse are so accurate and complete that we give them here in preference to any of our own. He says:—"Yosaï appartenait par sa famille à la meilleure société de Kioto. Avant de se distinguer comme peintre, il était déjà célèbre comme littérateur et comme érudit; il avait approfondi l'histoire des arts et des coutumes du Japon; c'était un esprit encyclopédique et peut-être la plus belle intelligence de son temps. Il apprit les éléments de la peinture dans l'atelier des Kano; son professeur fut Yenjo. Il étudia par la suite la manière des différentes écoles de peinture, sans se lier à aucune, mais en se rapprochant de plus en plus de l'école de Tosa. De cette étude d'ensemble poursuivie avec la vigueur qu'il apportait en toutes choses est né son style de peintre, style éclectique, indépendant, et en même temps fortement individuel, mélange heureux de spiritualisme raffiné et de réalisme scrupuleux. Une conception poétique toujours élevée, toujours imprévue; une sorte de philosophie sereine, une connaissance approfondie des caractères sociaux et humains de ses compatriotes, de larges et hardis coups d'ailes dans le champ de l'idéal: tel est le concours de hautes qualités qui composent le talent d'Yosaï. C'est si je puis dire, le peintre du Japon qui a mis le plus de littérature dans son art. Le sujet et la composition jouent dans chacune de ses œuvres un rôle auquel ses compatriotes n'avaient pas songé. En cela, bien que tout en restant très national, Yosaï est celui des artistes japonais qui se rapproche le plus de l'Europe. Il dédaigne les recherches du coloriste; tout en lui était tourné vers les qualités expressives du dessin, vers l'idée, vers le caractère. Un beau kakémono de Yosaï est une jouissance plus encore pour l'esprit que pour les yeux. Il n'est jamais sorti du domaine de l'art noble, mais il a dessiné les sujets les plus divers. Lorsqu'il est venu à Tokio en 1875, l'empereur le reçut avec les plus grands éloges et lui décerna le titre de premier peintre du Japon. Il est mort en 1878, à l'âge de quatre-vingt-onze ans. Les peintures de Yosaï sont très recherchées au Japon. Ses œuvres les plus célèbres sont: l'*Enfer*, en deux panneaux; les *Cinq cents Lakans*, en douze, et l'*Incendie d'Abôkion* (palais des empereurs de la Chine, brûlé en l'an 206 avant J. C.), en un seul et gigantesque kakémono."

The latter part of the eighteenth century witnessed the founding of what is commonly known as the Artizan school of Japanese pictorial art. The founders and pupils of all the previously established academies were of the aristocratic or upper classes; but now talent, wherever it showed itself, found for the first time the field of art open to it. Speaking of the new school, Mr. Anderson remarks:—"The most widely interesting phase in the art history of the period was the development of a new school recruited entirely from the working classes. The pioneers of the movement had been the older masters of the *Ukiyo-ye-riū*, Hishigawa Moronobu, Nishigawa Sukenobu, and Tachibana Morikuni, who were of Samurai grade, but the profession of drawing for engravers from about 1770 fell into the hands of *heimin* or commoners, of whom the Katsugawas, noted for colour-print designs of actors and courtesans, were amongst the earliest representatives. The mantle of the master, however, fell upon a reputed pupil of Katsugawa Shunshō, who at the end of the last century rose into fame under the assumed name of Hokusai, and from that time until his death, at the age of 89, in 1849, poured forth an unceasing stream of novel and vigorous creations in the form of book illustrations. The subject matter of Hokusai's works epitomised the whole range of Japanese art motives—scenes of history, drama, and novel; incidents in the daily life of his own class, realisations of familiar objects of animal and vegetable life, wonderful suggestions of the scenery of his beloved Yedo and its surroundings, and a hundred other inspirations that would require a volume to describe."

Of the early life of this versatile artist little authentic is known. He was born in the year 1760 in the Hon-jō quarter of Tōkiō, where his father, Nakajima Ise, carried on his trade of mirror making. HOKUSAI's real name appears to have been HACHIVEMON. His full *nom de pinceau* is KATSUSHIKA HOKUSAI.* Katsushika was derived from the district of Tōkiō in which he lived during the greater part of his artistic life. It is stated that at a very early age he displayed some taste for sketching, but he seems to have attracted no public attention until about the beginning of this century, when he commenced the career of a decorative artist and a teacher of drawing. Previous to this he had undergone a course of instruction and training under KATSUGAWA SHUNSHŌ. Probably the best known of HOKUSAI's works are the *Manguwa*, or Ten thousand rough sketches, and the *Fugaku Hiyaku-kei*, or a Hundred views of Fuji. Speaking of the former work and its author Mr. Anderson says:—"His public career did not commence until about 1810, when he was induced to take a wider range of action by establishing himself in Yedo [Tōkiō] as an industrial artist and teacher of drawing. Pupils quickly flocked to him, and his original sketches being insufficient to provide them with models, he was led to

* Like many other artists, HOKUSAI assumed several names, notably SŌRI, SAITO, MAN-RŪ-JIN, I-TSU, MANJI, and YAMEICHI. His best known *nom de pinceau* has been written by various European authors thus: HOFFSKAI, HOFERSAI, HOKIE, HOKSAI. Mr. F. V. Dickens remarks:—"Hokusai is a Chinese compound, which may be rendered 'northern studio,' and in it we see an allusion to the master's place of abode, Katsushika, which is situate in the northern part of the city."

multiply them by engravings, and to this end the publication of the *Manguwa*, or Ten Thousand Sketches, was commenced. The novelty and beauty of the woodcuts attracted immediate attention, and the draughtsman and teacher became almost at once a celebrity in a wide though humble sphere. His fame grew as volume after volume of his book appeared and edition after edition sold, and there were not wanting learned and clever men to write admiring prefaces to each issue, imitators to print rival works, and a multitude of pupils of his own class to perpetuate his name and style. There was nothing in his pictures to shock the taste of the more æsthetically constituted of his admirers, no lack of gravity or dignity in his saints and sages, of might and fierceness in his warriors, or of artless beauty in his renderings of his gentle compatriots, but his real strength lay in the popular sketches in which the everyday life of the people was mirrored with a truth that could come only from one of whose life these things formed a part—a truth that on-lookers from another world, like Moronobu and Itchō, could never attain; a truth, moreover, brightened by flashes of the native humour of the artist and never defaced by coarse, ill-tempered, or misconceiving caricature. Their ceremonials and amusements, their historical landmarks, their folk-lore and the homely jokes that repetition could not spoil were there in characters that the most unlearned could read, while at every page a well-known view, a common bird or insect, a household pet, a favourite flower, or some other of the thousand objects of daily familiarity found a graceful record in a few suggestive touches of the artist's magic pencil. It is impossible to conceive a work more calculated to influence those for whom it was intended, or to give the student of Old Japan a more complete view of the sentiments and tastes of the easy-going peaceful millions of the people."

We are indebted to Professor Edward S. Morse for the following translation of some notes written to him by an aged pupil of HOKUSAI. "Hokusai drew his *Manguwa*, or series of books, in Nagoya, a place celebrated for its painters. When he first went there the people went to see him, and asked him in what kind of drawing he excelled. And he replied that he who only excels in one thing is not a painter, but only a part of a painter. So they all came to him, and asked him to draw this object and that. He drew according to their requests, and this is said to be the beginning of his books. When he was very young he learned the art of drawing, but could not draw very well, and some one advised him that he had better give it up. This advice he did not follow, but went on studying, not from books, but from nature. It is said that, when he wanted to draw a dragon, he could see it before him (some kind of hallucination). When he was about to die, he sent a very pleasant letter to Mr. Takagi, one of my father's friends, which runs as follows:—

"King Ema [a sort of Japanese Pluto] has grown very old, and is about to retire from office. He has accordingly had built for him a nice little house in the country, and wants me to paint a *kakemono*. I must start within a few days, and when I go shall take my drawings with me, and take lodgings at the corner of

Figoku dori Nichome [Hell Street], and shall be very glad to have you visit me when you have occasion to go there. HOKUSAI.'

"He changed his name very often. He was first called JAITO, then HOKUSAI, then IITSU, and finally MANJI. At the time he published his *Manguwa* he was called HOKUSAI, and this name became predominant. Unfortunately, his drawings were not appreciated. It is even supposed to be a sign of poor taste to have his *kakemono* hanging in our rooms. He used the worst kind of brushes and colours,—the brushes made for writing and not for drawing, as they were cheaper."

Whatever may have been the amount of appreciation in which the *kakemono* and other paintings of the master were held during his lifetime, there can be no question that they have been highly valued since his death. In the painting of *kakemono* he displayed great power and versatility of invention and manipulation. As a fine example of his free and graphic style we may direct attention to that in the Hart collection, illustrated on Plate II. BIS: and as an equally fine example of what may be called his historical and elaborated style of painting we may mention the magnificent *kakemono* in the possession of Professor Morse, a woodcut of which is given on the Plate opposite. This work was executed when the master was in his eighty-sixth year, while his eyesight was still so good as to require no aid from glasses. "The *kakemono*," says its owner, "is exceedingly rich and beautiful in colour. It is a veritable 'harmony in red, green, and grey.' The extreme length of the figure, measuring from the extremity of the bow to the lower edge of the right foot, is seventeen and a half inches." The personage depicted is TAMATO-DAKÉ NO MIKOTO, a Japanese hero (A.D. 77-130).

But to return to the *Manguwa*. Mr. F. V. Dickens, in the Preface to his translations of the prefaces and titles of the Plates of the *Fugaku Hiyaku-kei*, remarks:—"Hokusai was, undoubtedly, even according to a Western standard, a man of true genius. He belonged to the '*ukiyo-ye*' (passing-world picture), that is, realistic genre school, and founded a division or offshoot of it, known among the writers of his time as the Katsushika school. The Preface to the First Volume of the '*Manguwa*' already alluded to, is worth citing at length, as explicative of the meaning and scope of his work, and showing the honour in which the Master was held, at all events during the latter half of his life:—"The looks and gestures of men give abundant expression to their feelings of delight and disappointment, of suffering and enjoyment. Nor are the hills and streams, herbs and trees, without each their peculiar nature, while the beasts of the field and the birds of the air, while insects and reptiles and fish, have all within them a vital essence; and glad are our hearts as we recognise such plenteousness of joy and happiness in the world. Yet, with change of place and season, all vanishes, and is passed away. How shall one hand down to future ages, and bring within the knowledge of our remote fellow men beyond a thousand leagues, the spirit and form of all the joy and happiness we see filling the universe! Art alone can perpetuate the living reality



Section First.



FROM A KAKEMONO PAINTED BY HOKUSAI

THE MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO

of the things of the world, and only that true art which abides within the realm of genius can properly serve this end. The rare talent of the Master Hokusai is known throughout the land. This autumn, in his journeyings westwards, the Master by good hap visited our city, and there, to the delight of both, came to know Bokusen of Gekkô (Moon-Light) Hall, under which roof some three hundred compositions were thought out and executed. Things of Heaven and of Buddha, the life of men and women, aye, even birds and beasts, herbs and trees, were not left unattempted, and the Master's brush depicted all phases and forms of existence. For some time past the talent of our artists had been on the wane; life and movement were wanting to their productions, and their execution fell constantly short of their conception. Of the sketches here presented, rough as they are, the admirable truth and vigour will not fail to be recognised; the Master has essayed to give life to all he has depicted, and his success is shown by the joy and



—SOME HOKUSAI'S 'MANGUWA'—

happiness he has so faithfully expressed. Who can add to his work? To the aspiring student of art this collection will form an inestimable guide and instructor. The title '*Manguwa*'—rough or rapid sketches—was chosen by the Master himself.—Written by Keijin, of Hanshu Hall, at Biroka in Owari (A.D. 1812), period of *Bunkwa*—Blooming of Letters."

The above cut gives an idea of HOKUSAI's free and graphic style of sketching as displayed in the *Manguwa*; and rough though it is, it is full of the air of life and happiness so ably descanted on by the author of the Preface just quoted.

The *Fugaku Hiyaku-kei*, or a Hundred views of Fuji, taken altogether may safely be pronounced the masterpiece of HOKUSAI. It presents a skill in drawing, a tenderness of treatment, and a poetical fancy, which are not found so closely associated together in any other of the master's works. In this book, HOKUSAI has, in a hundred drawings, essayed the portrayal of the "Peerless Mountain" from many different points of view, and under varying conditions of atmosphere, and at different seasons of the year. The whole of the illustrations are beautifully engraved and skilfully

printed in black and shades of grey. In many cases three wood blocks have been used to produce the effects. Amongst the most noteworthy pictures are "A Thunder-storm on Fuji," "On the road to the temple of Taiseiki," "Through a bamboo grove," "Mid the Spring blooms," "On a bright day," and "A Summer shower." No description, however, can convey a correct idea of these characteristic compositions; and to reproduce them properly would be a matter of great difficulty. The following quotation from the Preface to the first volume of the *Fugaku Hiyaku-kei*, as translated by Mr. Dickens, will afford some idea of the motives selected by HOKUSAI for illustration:—"As Fuji is lifted high in solitary grandeur over all the high hills around, so shall we say that the productions of the genius of HOKUSAI stand alone in unapproachable excellence. Not only in the fifteen provinces that lie within sight of him who gazes from the summit of Fuji, but throughout the length and breadth of the land, dare we foretell—'tis no rash prophecy—that these volumes will bring home to thousands the marvellous and beautiful aspects of the Mountain. Ten titles did the Master bestow upon Fuji, after heedful comparison of the various names that the admiration of the people had given to the Peerless Hill. Men shall never tire of turning over these pages, and as we are shown in them the high, bare peak, viewed from the near shore of Taō, or seem to gaze upon the Great Mountain from the distant Cape of Miho, our hearts expanding in the broad moonlight, our souls penetrated with a delight subtle as the perfume that opening flowers lend the passing breeze; or are persuaded that we are admiring the majesty of Fuji as we rest on our staff on the remote plain of Fujimi, or alight from our '*kago*' at the top of the pass of Shiwomi; whether a glimpse of the vast snow-clad slope is granted us through the drooping willow-branches, or the mighty cone is shown towering high o'er a billowy sea breaking in angry surf upon a rocky coast; whether we have pictured for us hollow valleys hidden in rolling mists, or the arduous climb up the craggy mountain-side, or the perilous descent from the rugged top,—we see the genius of the Master revealed in every effort of the brush!"

Amongst the numerous other works of HOKUSAI, one deserves special comment on account of the interesting subjects illustrated. We allude to the *E-hon Tei-kin O-rai*. From the graphic drawings contained in this book we can gather many facts connected with the several industries and daily occupations of the Japanese. We have reproduced some of the drawings in our pages.

It is much to be regretted that so few original drawings of this versatile artist exist. None of those prepared for his published works were ever preserved. Owing to the mode adopted by the Japanese wood engravers, of which we shall say a few words later on, they were invariably destroyed in the process of reproduction. One altogether remarkable series, however, exists, in the Hart collection, evidently prepared for a book but never engraved. The drawings are sixty in number, and are of the unusual dimensions of 14½ inches by 10 inches. They are marvels of delicate execution, so much so as to defy satisfactory reproduction. They bear no evidence of having

been executed by the common writing brushes which HOKUSAI has been accused of using on the score of cheapness; on the contrary, much of the finer details, notably the hair of the figures, must have been drawn with finely pointed brushes, such as those used by the artists of the *Tosa rin*. The paper on which the drawings are executed is extremely thin and fine and uniform in texture, as expressly prepared for the process of wood engraving. While we are pleased that so valuable and beautiful a series of original drawings by the great master exists, we cannot help regretting that it was not used for engraving. The publication of a book containing sixty unusually large and beautiful illustrations would have been a boon to the art world in general, and to the admirers of HOKUSAI in particular.

Professor Morse is the possessor of some interesting rough sketches made by HOKUSAI as a lesson for one of his pupils—the old artist who wrote the letter to Professor Morse which we have quoted—and these we are enabled, through the kindness of their owner, to give reproductions of. They appear in the two figures printed on the vignette page of this volume and in that shown in the accompanying cut. The figures are drawn together on one piece of paper with the



A STUDY BY HOKUSAI

人形も右に足の内何り
頭の下
夕ヨロモ外への雲や何れうへに
一考
と云ふ事こそ

attendant inscription which has been interpreted thus:—"The figures of persons must have the head over either of two feet perpendicularly, for they will appear tumbling down otherwise. You can compare with other pictures in application of this rule. Consider it." The boldly drawn perpendicular line which appears in all

the drawings and also in the inscription shows the application of the rule. The signature of HOKUSAI does not appear, but the fact that the studies are by his hand is authenticated beyond doubt.

In concluding these hasty notes on the great Japanese artizan artist we cannot resist quoting M. Gonse's tribute to his genius. He says:—"Quant à Hokusai, il est un des plus grands peintres de sa nation; à notre point de vue européen il en est même le plus grand, le plus génial. Si l'on considère en lui les dons généraux, les qualités techniques qui font les maîtres, sans distinction de temps ni de pays, il peut être placé à côté des artistes les plus éminents de notre race. Il a la force, la variété, l'imprévu du coup de pinceau, il a l'originalité et l'humour, la fécondité, la verve et l'élégance de l'invention, un goût suprême dans le dessin, la mémoire et l'éducation de l'œil poussés à un point unique, une adresse de main prodigieuse. Son œuvre est immense, d'une immensité qui effraye l'imagination, et résume, dans une unité d'aspect incomparable, dans une réalité intense, nerveuse, saisissante, les mœurs, la vie, la nature. C'est une encyclopédie du monde extérieur, c'est la comédie humaine du Japon. Hokusai appartient à l'école vulgaire, mais il s'élève bien au-dessus d'elle par l'envergure du style, par la profondeur du sentiment et la puissance comique. Il est à la fois le Rembrandt, le Callot, le Goya et le Daumier du Japon." Notwithstanding all that is said in the above panegyric, we must remark that words altogether fail to convey a correct idea of the peculiar genius and artistic versatility of HOKUSAI; a careful and often repeated study of his very numerous works can alone create a proper impression of his unique talents.

Of the contemporaries and successors of HOKUSAI in the *Ukiyo-ye riu*, we need say very little; their lesser lights are practically lost in the effulgence of the great master. The names of the chief are HOKKEI and ISAI, pupils of HOKUSAI; KEI-SAI EISEN, HIROSHIGE, SETTAN, and KIŌSAI, followers and imitators of the master. The first three followers flourished between the years 1830 and 1850, while the last, we understand, is still alive at the age of fifty-four.

Mr. Anderson says:—"After the death of Hokusai the productions of the artisan artist shared in the temporary paralysis induced by the shock of foreign contact. The only noteworthy workers of more recent times were Hiroshige and Isai, but within the last decade a new generation has appeared, and a revival of the old book industry, together with an extension of all art produce, is setting in with a vigour that promises well for the future. Japanese art is now in course of a somewhat critical transition, directed by the gradually increasing influence of European example, yet retarded in some degree by European demand for designs in the older manner. The present stage of the change is not altogether a happy one, but Japanese genius bids fair to construct before long a new style in which all the beauties of the past age will be preserved while its errors are eliminated." These are hopeful and encouraging words; and as they are spoken by the greatest European authority on the subject they may be accepted without reserve.

MATERIALS USED IN PAINTING.

The pictorial artists of Japan have used, apparently in all the great epochs, both paper and silk for their drawings and paintings. The paper preferred for painting on is called *tō-shi*, the best quality of which was and perhaps still is imported from China, but several kinds of home manufacture are used for ordinary works. For drawings in Indian-ink the *tō-shi* is preferred in its manufactured state, that is, without any further preparation; but for paintings in colours and gold the paper is washed with a thin size called *dō-sa*, the composition of which is as follows:—

Glue	.	(10 <i>momme</i>)	=	1·32507 ounces.
Alum	.	(5 <i>momme</i>)	=	·662535 „
Water	.	(1 <i>shō</i>)	=	1·5968 quarts.

This wash is allowed to become perfectly dry before the paper is painted on. The coating of size prevents the colours from running and becoming too much absorbed by the soft paper. The reason why unprepared paper is preferred by the sketchers in Indian-ink is because it allows more freedom of touch, and lends itself to the graphic sketchiness of brush-stroke so much affected and admired.

The silk used by painters is called *e-ginu* (picture silk). This is a fine gauzy material which, although it does not vary in its nature, is manufactured in several qualities. The *e-ginu* is carefully prepared with *dō-sa* in the following manner. The silk is stretched on a light frame of wood, and the edges secured by strips of paper pasted over them. When these are dry, the silk is washed with the *dō-sa* and set to harden for a couple of days. One or two additional washes may be required according to circumstances and the class and nature of the work to be executed. After all the washes have become thoroughly dry the silk is removed from the frame, and either used in its simple form or after it has been carefully pasted to a paper ground.

Wood panels are also used by Japanese artists for painting on. Those most commonly preferred are made of *hi-no-ki* (*Chamæcyparis obtusa*), a fine variety of white cedar, and of *sugi* (*Cryptomeria japonica*), Japanese cedar. These panels are simply treated with *dō-sa* before being painted on. When a hard wood is used, such as *keya-ki* (*Zelkova keaki*), the portions of the surface to be covered with painting have the grain filled up with a species of gesso prepared from calcined oyster shells, and then washed over with *dō-sa*.

As we have both described and illustrated the brushes used by the leading Japanese schools, it is unnecessary to particularly allude to them here. We may state, however, that the different kinds of hair used in the fabrication of artists' brushes in Japan are obtained from the horse, deer, goat (imported), hare, cat, marten, and the racoon-faced dog. The handles are of a species of bamboo called *me-dake*. The only description of pencil used for temporarily outlining or indicating the design is a piece of charcoal made from *hi-no-ki* or *kiri* (*Paulownia imperialis*). This is called a *yaki-fude* (burnt brush). This is not universally used by artists, some considering it beneath their dignity to resort to any such assistance.

For laying on gold powders the *tsutsu*, or dusting tubes, used by the workers in lacquer are employed. Illustrations of these are given in Section Fourth, page 30. The portions of the picture to be gilded are moistened with a very thin solution of glue immediately before the gold is dusted on.

The colours commonly used by the Japanese painters are precisely the same as those employed in high-class block printing; a list of these is given at the end of this essay.

Colours ground with lacquer have been employed by certain artists, notably ZETSHIU. In the Hart collection there are two fine albums of lacquer paintings by this master; one painted by him while in his seventy-fifth year. The paintings are executed for the most part on thick prepared paper somewhat resembling vellum: one or two are executed on gold grounds. The colours, with the exception of the red, are low-toned. The natural varnish, as prepared for the lacquer workers, appears in the browns; and *rō-urushi* is used for the black touches.

ENGRAVING AND PRINTING.

The Japanese derived the art of wood engraving from China about two centuries after it is understood to have been invented there. The earliest known efforts in the direction of preparing wood blocks for printing characters date about the end of the eighth century; but earlier attempts may possibly have been made. But as we have nothing to do with the art of wood engraving previous to its use for the purpose of pictorial or ornamental illustration, it is unnecessary to follow its history in the earlier stage. On this subject the learned Japanese scholar, Mr. Ernest Satow, remarks:—"The history of wood engraving in Japan is of course closely bound up with that of printed books, and in fact, as is well known, the number of illustrated books produced in this country [Japan] is enormous; consequent upon the extreme cheapness of the method. It costs no more to engrave a pictorial page than to

cover it with letter-press, and the popular literature is made up of the two ingredients combined in almost equal proportions. Nearly all the novels of the present century consist of illustrations, generally extending over two pages, and divided in the centre in a way that is distracting to a person unaccustomed to look at pictures by halves at a time, the corners of the page, or any blank space in the centre of the illustration being occupied by the story. The history of this application of the engraver's art is comparatively modern, and the oldest illustrated book I have yet met with is dated 1610. But previous to this there were engraved woodcuts on a large scale representing the popular gods, and to some of these a very great age is ascribed."

The wood preferred for engraving is that of the cherry tree, *sakura* (*Prunus pseudocerasus*), which originally grew wild in Japan, but is now carefully cultivated so that a constant supply of wood may be insured. The blocks are cut, in the direction of the grain, from the outside of the log, the heart-wood being altogether rejected by engravers. Blocks of considerable width are obtained; one in our possession measures $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches. They are sawn about $\frac{7}{8}$ of an inch thick; and when planed and made ready for the engraver they are about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch thick. In order to prevent the wood warping and cracking, cross pieces are frequently attached to each end of the blocks: but when the wood is old and thoroughly seasoned this precaution is often dispensed with, as in the case of the block now before us.

The paper preferred by the artist in preparing his drawing for the engraver is either *gampi-shi*, made chiefly from the bark of the *Wikstræmia canescens*; or *Mino-gami*, made from the bark of the *Broussonetia papyrifera* (paper mulberry). The finest quality of the latter paper is manufactured in the province of Mino, hence its name.

When both the drawing and the wood block are prepared, the engraver spreads on the surface of the latter a coating of very smooth rice paste and carefully removes all except the thinnest possible layer with his finger. Upon this he immediately lays, face downwards, the drawing, gently smoothing and pressing the same with his hand into perfect contact with the wood. After the paste has become dry, the paper is carefully scraped away as much as possible, in order that the drawing, next the block, may be seen more distinctly. A slight smear of hempseed oil is now applied to increase the transparency of the remaining film of paper and bring up the drawing clearly and sharply. At this stage the block is ready for engraving. As the grain of the wood runs lengthwise, the process of engraving differs entirely from that followed in European *ateliers*, and, accordingly, the outlining tools employed bear no resemblance to our gravers, which are only adapted for cutting fine lines in end-grain boxwood. The Japanese, however, use gouges, not dissimilar to ours, for cutting away the useless wood within and around the lines of the design. We have before us while we write a complete set of Japanese wood engraver's tools, comprising three *ko-gatana*, or outlining knives, in the form of firm blades of steel, from 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length and respectively $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in width, ground at their ends to about the angle of

40°, and fixed in round wood handles of about 3 inches in length; five chisels, varying from $\frac{1}{16}$ to $\frac{3}{8}$ inch in width, ground square, and fixed in flat handles; and eight *saraye-nomi*, or gouges, varying in width from $\frac{3}{16}$ to nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ inch, ground in the usual way on the convex side, and fixed in round handles.

The process of engraving is extremely simple. The artist first takes a suitable angular outlining knife, carefully sharpened, and holding it in an almost vertical position cuts an incision on each side of every line and detail of the drawing, leaving between them the exact width of line required. This is a proceeding demanding a keen eye, perfectly steady hand, and much practice. The experienced engraver attends to the minutest touch of the original drawing, cutting so as to produce a faultless fac-simile. The skill displayed by the engravers of HOKUSAI's sketches, and of such drawings as those on the Plates which face pages 8 and 16 of this article, is worthy of special comment. From the freest and most dashing brush-stroke, with all its broken effects, down to the most delicate hair-line work, the skill of the Japanese engraver never falters. His work may be called mechanical; but it demands immense practice and special culture to attain great proficiency in it. When all the outlines have been cut, the surface of the block between and around them is carefully cut away with the gouges and square chisels. Extreme caution has to be observed not to touch the finer lines left in relief, for, by reason of the grain of the wood running across them, they are liable to chip or splinter off at the slightest touch of the gouge. No greater relief is given to fine lines than is absolutely necessary for their successful printing, while the larger spaces of the ground are gradually sloped down from them. By this treatment the maximum durability of the engraving is secured. At one corner and at one side of the block are two small pieces of the original surface of the wood left standing: that at the corner has a rectangular depression, and that at the side of the block a straight rebate cut in it. These are the register marks, against which the paper is placed in the process of printing: they are called by the Japanese *kentō* (literally, to take aim at).

The Plate opposite is printed from the wood block in our possession, engraved expressly for this Work by a clever artist of Tōkiō. Although it is perfectly representative of the larger class of Japanese wood engravings, it presents no instance of specially difficult work. It is by no means so masterly a piece of cutting as the original block from which the dragon, after the drawing by SHUMBOKU, was printed (see page 8).

When the engraving is completed and the *kentō* adjusted, the thin film of paper still adhering to the portions left in relief is washed off, and the block is ready for the printer.

For designs which are to be printed in several colours several blocks are required. The outline is first engraved in the manner above described; and from it are printed as many impressions as there are to be colour blocks. These impressions are





WOODCUT SPECIALLY ENGRAVED IN JAPAN FOR THIS WORK.

separately coloured or marked on those portions in which the respective tints are ultimately to appear, and subsequently pasted to blocks in the usual way. Care was of course taken to print the *kentō* along with the design, to enable the register to be correctly transferred to every block.¹ The colour blocks are engraved in precisely the same way as the outline.

The printing of the colour blocks is a matter in which the Japanese display both taste and skill of no mean order. The colour is distributed on the block by means of a brush properly charged and dexterously manipulated. By this method, varying shades can be imparted to one block. The graduated tinting so much admired in certain Japanese coloured prints, is obtained by first fully coating the block with colour, and then wiping it partly off again, leaving the coating in a perfectly even gradation of body on the surface of the wood. This is taken up by the paper in the printing. Different colours are blended by the same method, assisted by a blending brush. This mode of applying the colours to the blocks of course gives, in many instances, all the charm of hand colouring to the impressions: indeed, we have seen prints so produced in which there were effects of colour that would have been no easy task to imitate by the brush directly applied to the paper. For a very fine example of this class of chromo printing we may refer our readers to Plate XVI., on which is a reduced but faithful copy of a block print in our possession; and for equally fine examples of the older style of printing, in which graduated colouring does not appear, reference may be made to Plates XIV. and XV., on which are accurate reproductions from a book published in the year 1775. The colouring in these is of the most refined and harmonious character.

When the colour has been spread on the block to the printer's satisfaction, he takes a sheet of paper, on which the outline or black impression has already been printed, and carefully lets it fall on the block after placing the proper corner and edge accurately in the depressions of the *kentō*. Then with a nearly flat circular pad or rubber he presses, with a gentle sliding motion, the paper against the block until he is satisfied it has absorbed all the free colour. The same method is followed in printing all kinds of wood engravings. The rubber is usually made of twisted paper string, rolled spirally into the form of a circular mat, having on its underside several layers of paper, pasted on, to make it durable and smooth. Over this is strained tightly a piece of the dried sheath of a bamboo sprout, slightly touched with *goma-abura* (*Sesamum orientalis* oil) to make it pass over the paper more easily. No press is used, but the block is laid on a board, the further side of which is slightly elevated, with its corners resting on four small, damp cotton cloth cushions, to prevent its slipping. These are placed on the flooring mats of the room on which the workman also sits.

For ordinary black printing the paper is not specially prepared beyond being very slightly damped; but that employed in colour printing is treated with *dō-sa* to prevent the tints spreading.

"Printing in colours appears," says Mr. Satow, "to be nearly two centuries old. Sakakibara attributes its origin to the year 1695, when portraits of the actor Ichikawa Dan-zhifu-rau, coloured by this means, were sold in the streets of Yedo for five cash apiece. Before this woodcuts were rudely coloured by hand, as in the illustrated edition of the *Hou-gen* and *Hei-ji Monogatari*, in six vols., of 1626. At first sight the colours may appear to have been printed, but closer examination shows that they sometimes overlaid each other, which proves that they were laid on in succession with the ordinary hair-pencil." The first artists of note in this branch of pictorial art were the KATSUGAWAS, and notably KATSUGAWA SHUNSHŌ, the reputed master of the great HOKUSAI. The KATSUGAWAS were celebrated for their coloured prints of contemporary actors and courtesans; but SHUNSHŌ appears to have widened the circle of his subjects. The eight figure subjects represented on Plates XIV. and XV., give a correct idea of the style of this school of printing as it obtained towards the end of the eighteenth century. The coloured prints after HOKUSAI are of the most beautiful character and quite worthy of the master's genius. The principal contemporary colour-print draughtsmen were UTAMARU, the author of the *Seirō Nen-jin Gioji*, published in 1804, the UTAGAWAS—TOYOKUNI 1st and 2nd, KUNIYOSHI, and KUNISADA, all noted producers of theatrical prints, SADATSAGE, SADAHIDE, HIROSHIGE, KUNIYASU, SHUNYE, and SHUNTEL. The last two produced many works remarkable for their bold handling both in design and colouring.

COLOURS.

The colours used by the Japanese pictorial artists and colour printers are in all essentials identical. They are neither numerous nor expensive in their nature, as the subjoined list will show.

Konjō or *Gunjō*, blue carbonate of copper, as procured from gold or copper mines. This is ground in a mortar and afterwards carefully sifted. Four different tints are produced, the lightest being called *biaku-gunjō* (pale blue).

Roku-shō, green carbonate of copper, or ordinary malachite. This is ground and sifted, producing six tints of *awo*, or green, the lightest being called *biaku-roku*. A light olive green is produced from the deepest tint by boiling it in a decoction of grass, and fixing the shade thus obtained with a solution of borax.

Ai-rō-bū, dark blue, prepared from old blue rags by boiling out their colour, native indigo originally prepared from *Polygonum tinctorium*. In the crude state in which it is employed by the dyer it is not considered sufficiently matured for high-class artistic work.

Shu, vermilion.

Benigara, red oxide of iron, prepared from a native ore.

Tan, red oxide of lead.

Shō-yen-jū, apparently cochineal. It is imported from China in the form of small pieces of felt impregnated with colour.

Yō-kō, carmine, imported.

Shi-dō, brownish ochre, a native earth.

Tai-sha-bō, red ochre, a native earth.

O-dō, yellow ochre, a native earth.

Shi-ō, gamboge, imported.

Go-fun, white, prepared from oyster shells, buried for some years, and then calcined.

Sumi, black, Indian ink.

Several pigments of an inferior description, both native and imported, have been recently used by the printers of the commoner class of pictures, notably those called *nishiki-ye* (brocade pictures): the principal ones are as follows:—

Ukon, turmeric yellow.

Seki-ō, realgar.

Beni, safflower.

Bero-ai, Prussian blue.

Bero-ai and *seki-ō* mixed, producing a green.

Tō-no-tsuchi, white lead used for lightening the above pigments.

Iyen-sumi, soot of pine wood specially prepared.

The medium used for all the above pigments is commonly very thin rice paste. The colours are sold either in powders or sticks.





巴圖著
月露竹石
丁巳年
松遠老人
畫

SECTION FIRST.—PLATE I.

PAINTING.



THE picture given in this Plate is reproduced by heliogravure from a large Japanese painting, of the Chinese School, by BAI-ITSU RŌ-JIN YAMA-MOTO, and is a work probably executed in the early years of the present century. The subject is described as spring time, a composition of birds, bamboos, and rocks. The painting may be accepted as fairly representative of the School, presenting the conventional rendering of rocks, the absence of perspective, the decorative disposition of bamboos and flowers, and the really clever and spirited drawing of birds. The general manipulation is good, giving the impression that it is the work of an unhesitating hand, perfectly certain of producing the effects desired. The whole is executed with a free brush in Indian ink; accordingly the reproduction gives, on a small scale, the exact appearance of the original painting. The height of the painting is 4 feet 8 inches.

In the possession of MM. J. DE VIGAN ET C^{IE}, of Paris.





SECTION FIRST.—PLATE II.

PAINTING.



THE Painting which is given in this Plate is a reduced copy from a fine *kakemono* by MIYAGAWA CHOSHUN, a distinguished and much admired artist of the old popular school of MATAHEI, who lived at Tōkiō at the commencement of the eighteenth century.

The original is executed, on paper of a cold buff tint, almost entirely in body colours, very evenly applied. The colouring generally is rich and refined, combining force and harmonious repose with singular skill. The figure is thoroughly well drawn, from a Japanese art standpoint; and is expressive of gentleness and meditation which accords well with an attitude so full of elegance and tranquillity.

The figure represents the celebrated TAKAO, who, owing to her unfortunate childhood, became a courtesan of Yoshiwara; but who, from her innate refinement of manner and conversation, was compared to the flower of the *nymphaea* which smiles in the mud with all its natural freshness and purity.

This Painting is thoroughly representative of CHOSHUN's style. Although the subjects of the old popular school may be said to have displayed a lack of refinement and distinction, those from the brush of CHOSHUN go far to redeem the school from reproach; indeed, many of his subjects express very elevated sentiments. The *kakemono* under review bears the full signature of the master.

The portion represented in the Plate measures in the original 25 inches in height by 17 inches in width including the silk margins.

In the possession of ERNEST HART, ESQ., M.R.C.S., of London.





SECTION FIRST.—PLATE II. BIS.

PAINTING.



CHARACTERISTIC example of the great HOKUSAI's free and rapid style of painting is represented in the accompanying Plate. It is taken from a *kakemono* painted, on paper, for the most part in transparent colours, dexterously laid on with large brushes. It is probable that the entire subject did not occupy the master above a couple of hours.

The subject is OFUKU throwing beans at a demon; and accordingly illustrates a popular Japanese legend. OFUKU is an imaginary personage, derived from OUSUMÉ, the goddess who danced before the grotto in which AMATÉRASU, the goddess of the sun, was confined; she is believed to be a beneficent spirit who brings good fortune to her friends. HOKUSAI has in this picture conceived the happy idea of making OFUKU, as the good genius, expel the demon or the principle of evil. The scene is in allusion to the popular ceremony observed on *Setsu-bun*, the last evening of the old year. On this evening it is usual in Japanese families for beans to be parched and, while still hot, thrown into all the corners of the house where an evil spirit could be supposed to lurk. The throwing is accompanied by loud cries of "*Fuku-wa-uchi! Oni-wa-soto!*"—"In with good luck and out with the devil!"

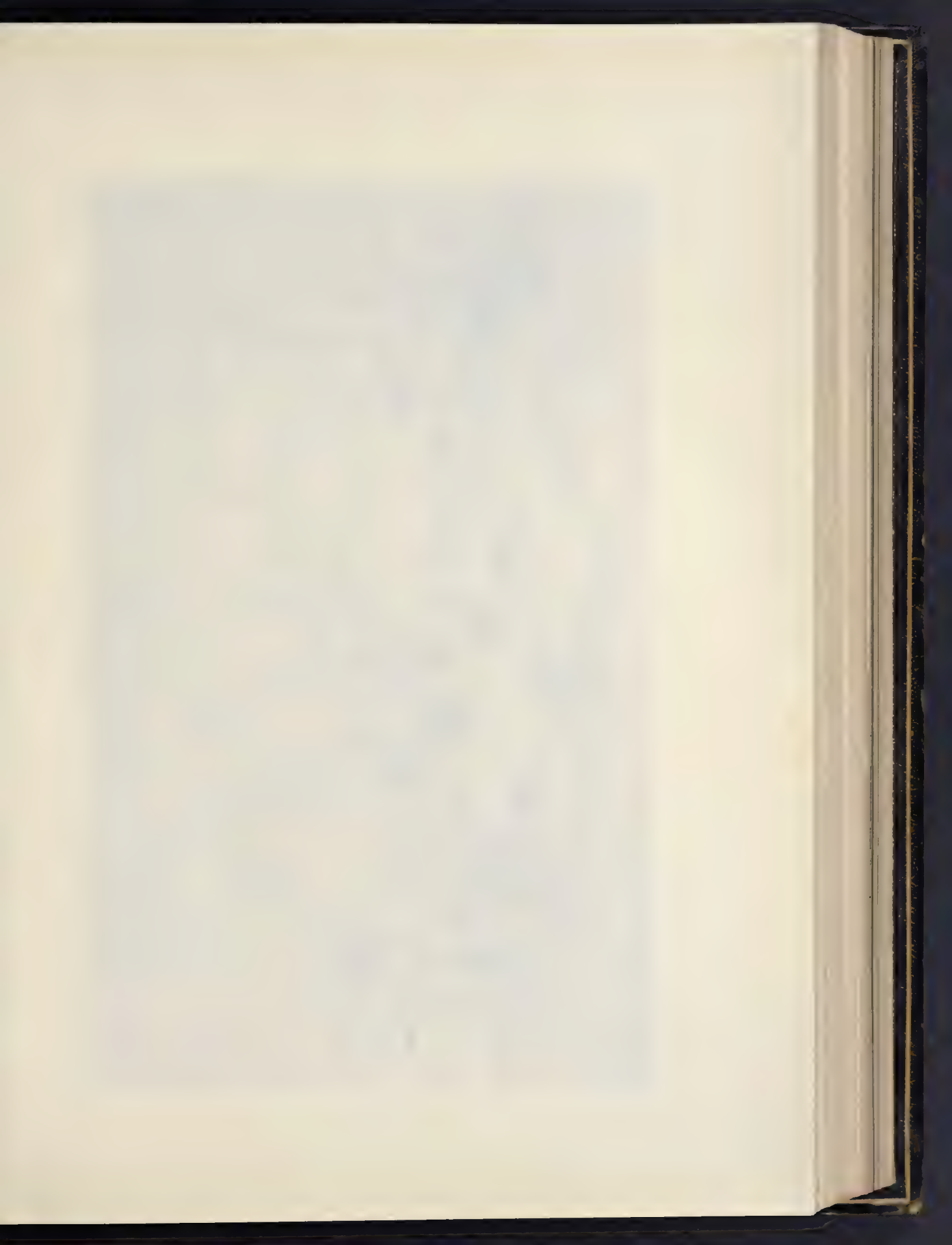
The *kakemono* is in the artist's later style; and was probably painted about the year 1800. It bears HOKUSAI's signature. *Kakemono* by this highly esteemed master are very few in number and are valued at high prices by collectors.

The portion reproduced in our Plate measures in the original 27 inches in height by 16 inches in width including the silk borders.

In the possession of ERNEST HART, ESQ., M.R.C.S., *of London.*









S. of A. in 1857

Naupia, Low & 30 P.m.

Low & 30 P.m.

SECTION FIRST.—PLATES III. AND IV.

DRAWING.



AREFULLY executed drawings or paintings in Indian-ink, or in delicate colours on wood, are sometimes met with on the folding wood fans which have reached us from Japan; but it is very rare to meet with drawings on wood panels of the importance and exquisite delicacy of those which are reproduced on the Plates under review.

The drawings are executed in Indian-ink upon panels of close-grained pine wood, apparently the Japanese *hime-ko-matsu* (*Pinus parviflora*). The birds, flowers, and other details are finely outlined, and shaded with delicate washes of ink, the surface of the wood having been previously sized to prevent the ink from running or sinking in. The designs are characteristically Japanese, displaying the skill of the native artists in flower and bird drawing to great advantage.

The transparency and extreme delicacy of these Indian-ink drawings have rendered it extremely difficult to reproduce them in a perfectly satisfactory manner; and the autotype process adopted is the only one capable of giving anything like a truthful idea of the originals; even in it a certain degree of hardness is unavoidable.

The panels are 20 inches long by 12 inches broad.

In the possession of THE AUTHOR.



RESCUE

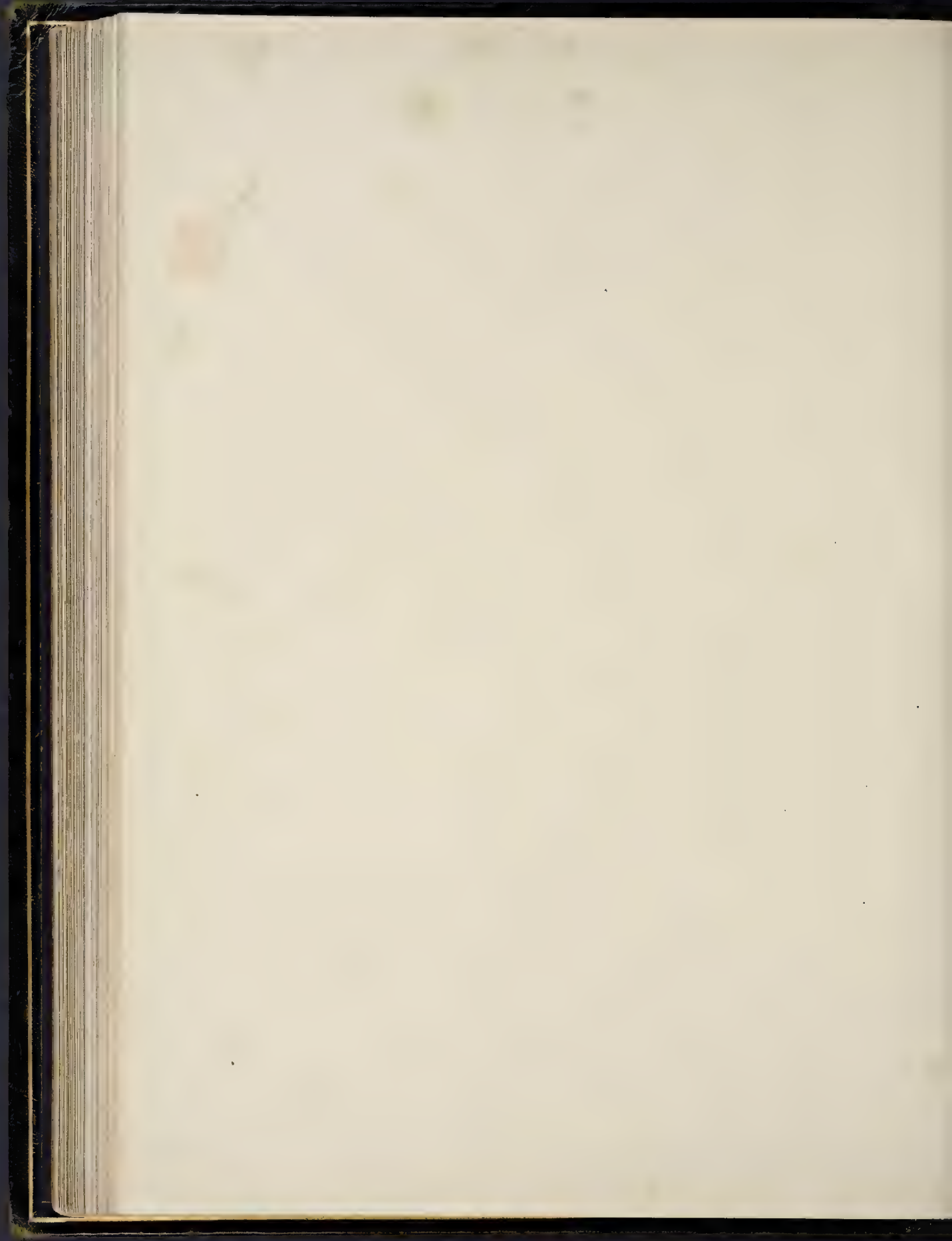
1877



1877

1877

1877



SECTION FIRST.—PLATE V.

PAINTING.



THE "Peerless Mountain," FUSIYAMA, is of all natural objects the most beloved by the artists of Japan; and they appear never to weary in their efforts to portray it in painting, embroidery, and lacquer, or to represent it in porcelain and metal-work. As Mr. Dickins writes: "There is hardly a garden or a park throughout Japan that does not boast of a miniature 'Fuji.' On fans, on trays, on screens, on almost every article whether for use or ornament, the bold, shapely lines of the mountain are reproduced. No poet has omitted to celebrate its grandeur and beauty. The plot of the most interesting of the old classical romances, the 'Taketori monogatari,' written in the tenth century, turns upon a legend connected with it. Upon it gods dwell; about it demons make their lair. A hundred modes of writing the name have been fondly invented by the learned. To wise and foolish alike it represents the perfection of beauty and the height of sublimity; and the least patriotic and most soulless of Japanese keeps in his heart an undying and enthusiastic love for the 'August Mountain,' the centre and glory of his country."

The mountain is most skilfully represented in the painting on silk from which the present Plate has been produced by autotype: and in looking at its beautiful cone we can understand the feelings of Rozankô when he wrote the following panegyric:—"Like that of a carefully worked gem is the form of Fuji; its hue is that of polished silver. From whatever quarter beheld, it is seen to rise, not sheer into the sky, but as a perfect cone, not more inclined on one side than on another. Eight are the sloping faces of Fuji; the pure, gem-like Mountain,

* *Fugaku Hiyaku-kei*, translated by F. V. Dickins, Sc.B.

standing out against the blue sky like a lotus-flower emergent from the surface of a pool. Exalted over all hills is the lofty summit of Fuji, majestic monarch of our land. How splendid is the Peerless Mountain illumined by the red rays of the rising sun! how beautiful its purple mass set in the midst of the glory of sunset!—at birth and death of day, alike calling forth the wonder and admiration of men. It changes in hue and form as we approach it or recede from it. A hundred aspects has the Great Mountain; in spring its peak is tipped by spiral cloud-wreaths; in autumn the vast mass is blown by the winds clear of all mist. Now vapours encircle its top, now haze clings round its base."

The last aspect described by Rozankô is that depicted by the artist in the painting under review. The work is executed in Indian-ink on white corded silk, with a touch at once free and unerring, plainly indicating a master hand. Like most works of Japanese art of a similar nature, the present strikes one as remarkable on account of the great effect produced by so few and simple touches of the brush: but in painting of this class the Japanese artists are unrivalled. It is to be regretted that the modesty of the painter has prevented him recording his name on the work.

In the possession of MESSRS. JACKSON & GRAHAM, of London.





G. A. Huxley, air

Landscape, w. G. C. Huxley

Huxley, London



SECTION FIRST.—PLATE VI.

PAINTING.



HAVING described the companion painting, illustrated in the preceding Plate, it is unnecessary to do more than direct attention to the new features introduced in the quaint and characteristic composition which forms the subject of the Plate now under review. It will be observed that the landscape represented in the hanging picture is identically the same as that which forms the subject of the companion painting; but that it is here subordinated to other and more forcible decorative features, namely, an elaborate frame-work, a vase of flowers, and an open *ori-hon* laid across a peacock's feather. The frame-work of the hanging picture is painted in imitation of strips of ornamental stuffs; and real stitching divides them, and represents the seams which would be necessary to connect such strips were they applied. The cords which suspend the picture, and which are shown interlacing the side pieces and terminating in tassels, are embroidered in a very careful manner. The stand, vase, leaves, and two of the flowers are painted; but the third flower, which falls across the lower edge of the frame, is skilfully worked in embroidery. The *ori-hon*, or book, is entirely represented by painting, while the feather is for the most part embroidered. The entire composition and the modes employed in rendering it with such telling effect are highly characteristic of Japanese art.

In the possession of MESSRS. JACKSON & GRAHAM, of London.





SECTION FIRST.—PLATE VII.

PAINTING.



THE *kakemono* reproduced on the present Plate is a characteristic *Butsu-ye*, or Buddhist picture, executed with the greatest delicacy and precision of touch, on paper, in a fine class of body-colour, closely resembling that used by the western illuminators and miniaturists of the middle ages. Gold is profusely introduced throughout the entire subject, and with very beautiful effect. The black ground imparts great value to the illuminated portions.

The central figure, standing on the sacred nelumbium, surrounded with light pink clouds, is KOKUZŌ BOSATSU (*Ākas'āgarbha*), the Bodhisattva of Eternal Benevolence; represented in this case with one hand open and the other holding the sacred gem, but more commonly depicted with a sword in the right hand and the gem in the left. The Chinese inscription on the right side of the picture signifies—"Adoration to the All-compassionate and All-merciful Bodhisattva Ākas'āgarbha, King of the precious gem of omnipotence, who bestows full and perfect happiness and wisdom in accordance with prayer." The Sanskrit inscription on the other side of the figure has a similar signification. KOKUZŌ BOSATSU is clad in rich garments, and is crowned with a diadem, in the centre of which is the precious gem, and invested with a circular nimbus of green and gold.

The figure standing on a rock, on the right of KOKUZŌ BOSATSU, is the flame god, FUDŌ (*Akschara*), bearing his usual attributes, the sword and cord, and invested with his aureole of flame. The opposite figure, standing on a crouching demon, is BISHAMON (*Vāis'ramana*), one of the four Dēva kings of Mount Sumēru, and the guardian of the North.

The inscription between the lower figures appears to indicate that the picture represents the particular group worshipped at the temple of Kiyosumi-zan, situated

on the boundary between Shimōsa and Awa. In all probability the *kakemono* came from this temple.

The original painting, exclusive of the silk mounting or borderings, measures 15 inches by 10 inches.

In the possession of the AUTHOR.





SECTION FIRST.—PLATE VIII.

PAINTING.



WO pages from an *ori-hon* devoted to the representation of monkeys are given in the present Plate. The Paintings are most carefully executed in broad washes and pencilling of extreme delicacy on *e-ginu*, or picture silk, prepared with *dō-sa*.

The Paintings bear the signature of the great master of the Shi-jō naturalistic school, SO-SEN, but there is just a doubt as to its authenticity. From certain characteristics in the drawing, chiefly about the joints of the legs of the monkeys, it appears probable that the paintings are from the brush of SO-SEN's clever imitator GAN-SEN. Be this as it may, the works in question are fine specimens of the naturalistic school of Japanese painting.

Speaking of MORI SO-SEN, who painted in the latter part of the eighteenth and the first twenty years of the present century, M. Gonse, in his *L'Art Japonais*, remarks:—"Sosen est connu chez nous comme peintre de singes. Son nom veut dire littéralement 'sennins des singes.' Il avait pris peu à peu, dit-on les manières, les mouvements, presque le physique des singes qu'il allait étudier pendant des mois entiers dans les forêts des environs d'Osaka, vivant lui-même de fruits et de racines. Il est certain qu'il a peint ces quadrumanes avec beaucoup d'esprit et une connaissance incomparable de leurs habitudes et de leur anatomie. On peut dire qu'aucun artiste ne les a rendus avec cette intensité de vie. Mais c'est rabaisser l'immense talent de Sosen que de l'enfermer dans cette spécialité. Il y a dans la collection de M. Ph. Burty un poisson lavé à l'encre de Chine, qui est une merveille de dessin large et résolu; dans celle de M. Bing, deux rats trainant un coquillage, qui sont d'une délicatesse charmante; dans celle de M. Georges Petit, un daim à l'encre de Chine, d'une vigueur superbe. Je possède une biche broutant des herbes fleuries, d'une nonchalance et d'une jeunesse de mouvement inimitables, et un tigre d'une souplesse

féline et d'une science de dessin qu'aucun artiste de l'Europe n'a jamais surpassée. Ces œuvres de choix suffisent à classer Sosen au premier rang des peintres animaliers de tous les temps et de tous les pays."

Notwithstanding SO-SEN's pencil was extremely prolific, his works are rarely to be met with and difficult to procure. This fact has doubtless led to imitations of his works and style, and also to the reprehensible practice of forging his signature.

In the possession of PROFESSOR J. A. EWING, of Dundee.





SECTION FIRST.—PLATE IX.

PAINTING.



AMONG the many highly interesting and beautiful specimens of Painting on silk tissues, which have reached Europe from Japan, few, if any, may be said to surpass the one represented on this Plate, either in artistic conception or skilful manipulation. It is painted on a thick crape silk, called *chirimen*, stained with grey tints to represent a pool or broad stream of water. The water-lines, the duck, and the water-plants are produced in colours resembling dyes, which pass entirely through the fabric. From the general appearance of the work it seems highly probable that the tissue was originally dyed of a light grey colour, with a "resist" applied where the body of the duck and some portions of the leaves fall. To impart the natural brilliancy to the feathers of the bird, the artist has added to his painting a delicate system of embroidery. The head, neck, and tail feathers are covered with small horizontal stitches of bright green silk, which glisten with every change of light; and the feathers of the wings have their edges defined and their shafts produced in fine embroidery. The small portion of the leg, above the water, is also embroidered. The plumage of the bird is most artistically rendered, and with a tenderness and fidelity to nature absolutely charming. In this work we have a skilful combination of painting and embroidery, to which may also be added dyeing, each lending valuable aid in the production of a masterpiece of decorative art. The original work is of an important size, measuring 32 inches high by 27 inches wide. Painted by NISHI MURA, of Tòkiô.

In the possession of the AUTHOR.





SECTION FIRST—PLATE X.

PAINTING.



THE important and beautifully executed Painting, which has been reproduced in the most accurate manner in the present Plate, is the work of an artist, apparently attached to the Tosa School, and is of recent date. The inscription on the upper part of the picture reads *Dai Nippon* (Great Japan) *Nan-zen Haku-gō* (probably the artist's *noms de pinceau*) *Ōzawa* (the artist's surname).

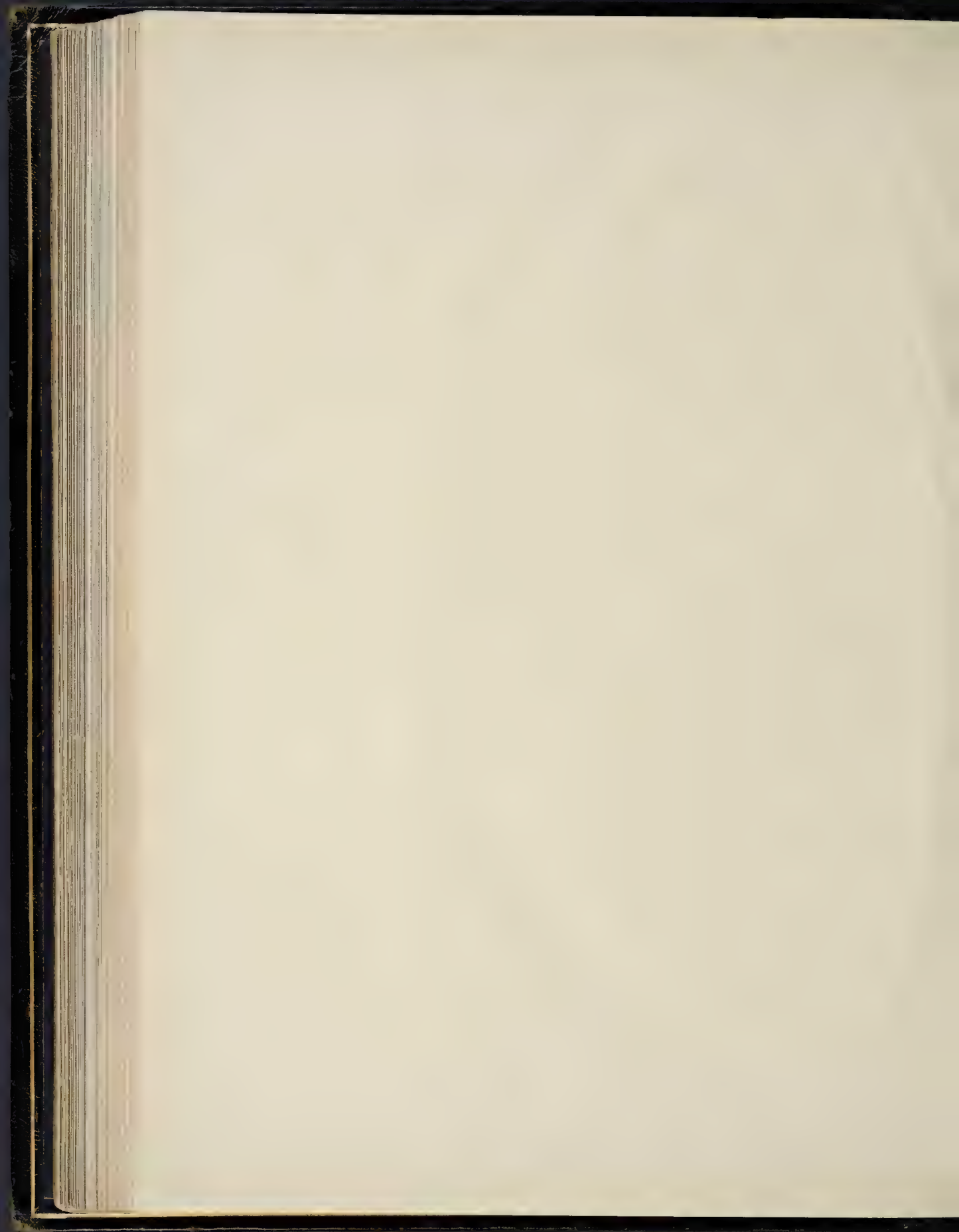
This artist, however, is not one of the great men whose reputation is established in connexion with the Tosa School of painting.

The painting is most carefully executed on *e-ginu*, or picture silk, prepared with *dō-sa*, chiefly in a very thin body-colour; but in certain parts, such as the seeds of the grasses, the shafts and barbs of the feathers of the crane, the red crest of its head, and the markings of its legs, the colour is laid on so thick as to produce the effect of relief. This has been imitated in our reproduction by embossing. The colouring throughout the picture is most refined, and the manipulation, in its special class, leaves little to be desired. The general treatment is more laboured than that which is held most in repute by Japanese experts; but, to our mind, the beauty of the result quite justifies the means adopted to produce it.

The original painting is of important dimensions, measuring $23\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 19 inches.

In the possession of THOMAS W. CUTLER, ESQ., *of London.*







SECTION FIRST.—PLATE XI.

PAINTING.



CAREFUL reproductions of six paintings from a very beautiful *orihon*, or folding book, are given in the accompanying Plate. The originals are evidently the work of a very talented Japanese artist. The book contains eight paintings, the best of which have been reproduced. They are very carefully executed, on a fine silk ground, in transparent colours, laid on so thinly as to resemble stains. The flesh colours are the only ones which have any appearance of body, but even these are clear and lustrous. The grey backgrounds of all the pictures are most dextrously manipulated; and have a depth and mysterious softness which are altogether charming. Gold is introduced sparingly, and in a manner which strongly reminds us of the miniatures of mediæval manuscripts.

The subjects of the paintings appear to be mythological or legendary; but we have not been able to obtain any satisfactory description of them. The original paintings measure $7\frac{5}{8}$ inches by $6\frac{5}{8}$ inches.

In the possession of HENRY DOULTON, ESQ., of London.







SECTION FIRST—PLATE XII.

PAINTING.

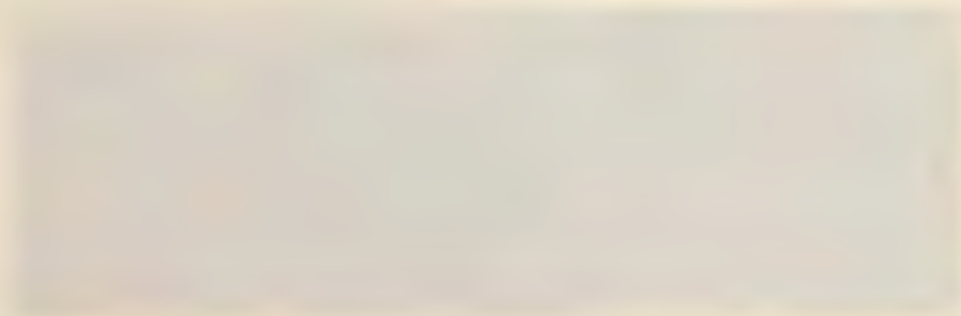
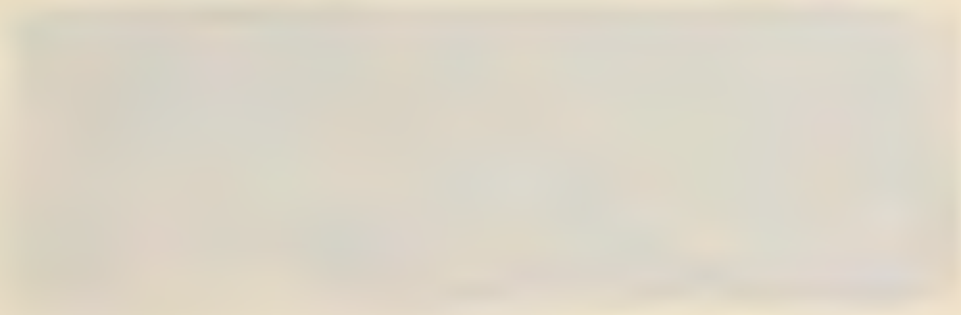


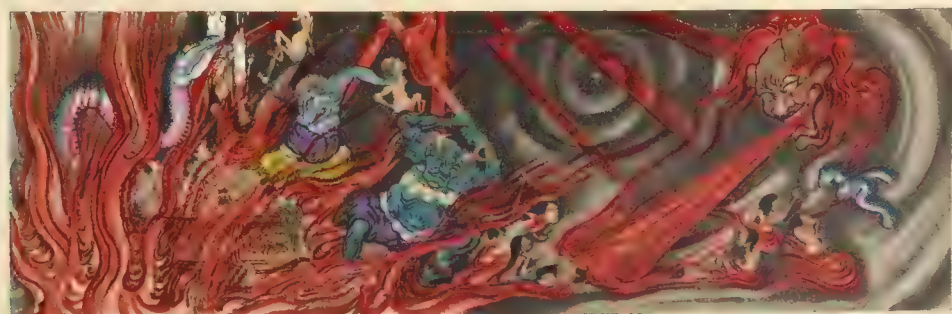
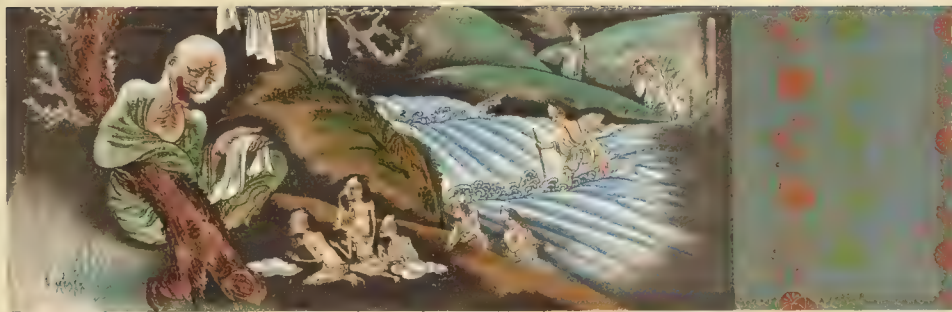
IX examples of a simple class of painting, apparently after a Chinese style, are reproduced in the present Plate. Although not of the highest excellence, they convey a good idea of the skill of the Japanese artists in the portrayal of birds, vegetation, and landscape by simple and rapid brush work—work essentially unlaboured, but in which every touch is made to tell.

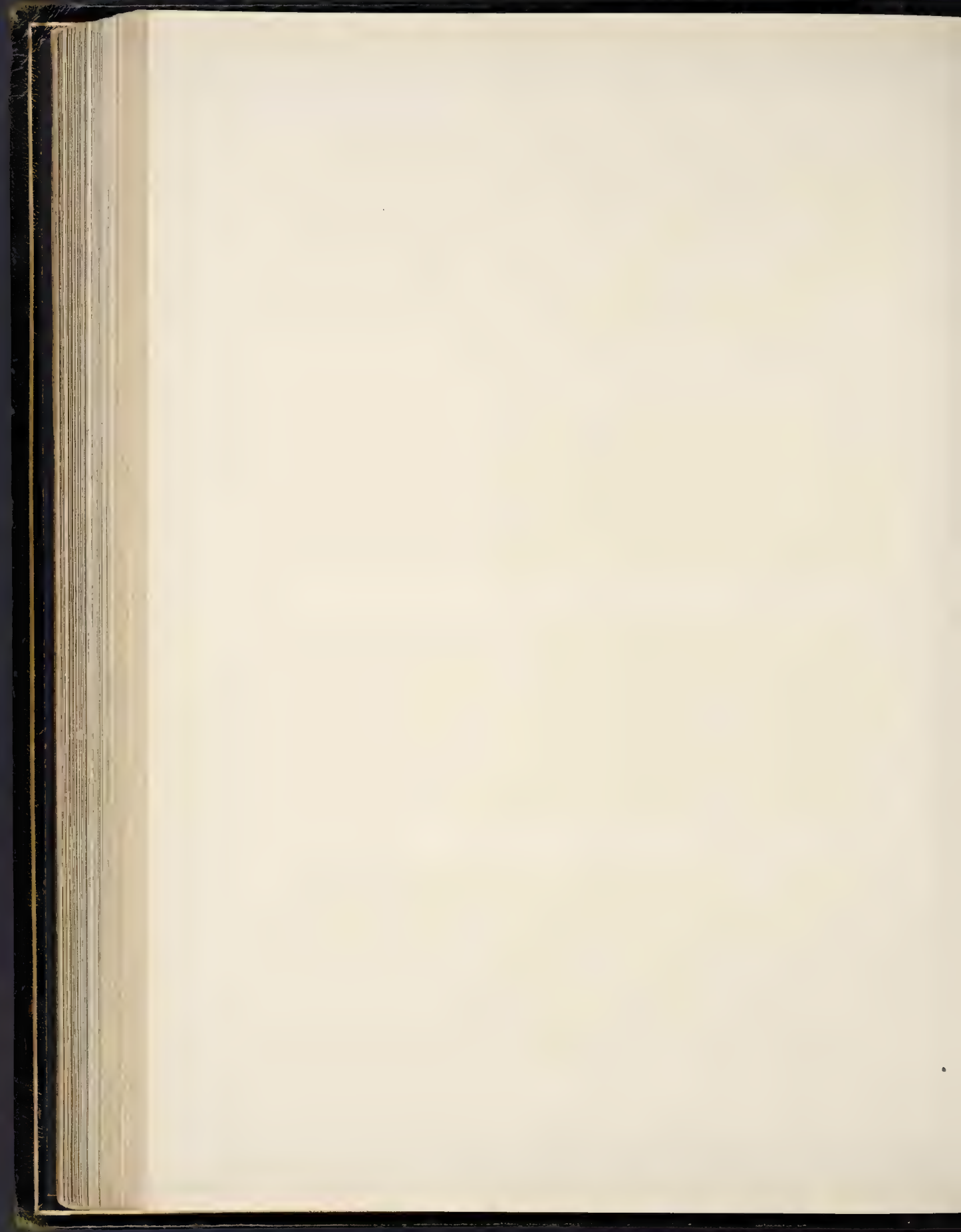
The six examples have been selected from a large number of a similar class; and may be accepted as fairly representing the common range of such subjects, and the favourite manner of treating them, a manner which the Japanese artists have unquestionably at some time derived from the Chinese. They are painted in wash colours, more or less transparent, on a very thin picture silk which has been prepared with *dō-sa* in the usual way. They are evidently the work of an ordinary artist, and as such are here given.

The reproductions on the Plate are about one-third the size of the original paintings.

In the possession of MESSRS. LIBERTY & Co., of London.







SECTION FIRST.—PLATE XIII.

PAINTING.



THE remarkable series of Water-colour Paintings represented on this Plate, are from a Japanese *makimono* or roll, measuring about eleven feet six inches long by ten and a half inches wide; the paintings join each other and form a continuous subject about ten feet in length. The divisions adopted on the Plate are slightly indicated by the original artist by a trifling alteration in the treatment of the background. The painting is executed chiefly in a transparent class of water-colour, with a very sparing use of body-colour, upon silk tissue, mounted upon tough paper. The order in which the various scenes follow each other is shown by the letters placed under them. This, like all Japanese rolls and books, reads from right to left.

The entire subject represents Hell, according to the ideas of the Japanese Buddhists, in which the torments of the wicked are portrayed with fearful vividness, and not altogether without a trace here and there of very grim humour. The first division opens (A) with a green, hilly country, doubtless intended to signify the world, and three human figures, dressed in grave-clothes, finding their way from a dark valley—the valley of the shadow of death—towards a direction-post which marks the ford of a mighty rushing river; one being is depicted dashing across, with a staff in one hand, and holding up his shroud with the other; and on the left bank are two pallid creatures peering into the dreadful land they have now to enter. The valley and the river are expressive emblems of the departure from this life and the cold passage towards the unknown realms beyond. Far on the bank (B) is seated a terrible hoary-headed giantess (*San zu no Kane-baba**),

*For the Japanese names of the mythological personages in these scenes we are indebted to a writer in the *Theological Review* (vol. xi., 1874), who, in describing a similar *Inferno*, was assisted by a Japanese scholar.

resting against the trunk of a lifeless tree: she is grinning with grim and significant import at a group of miserable beseeching creatures kneeling at her feet, from whom she is removing the grave-clothes before she insists on their continuing their journey. In their scanty funeral garments and head-dress they have travelled the dreary valley and forded the mighty river; now, devoid of all covering, save a simple loin-cloth, they have to appear before the inexorable judge who is to pronounce their awful doom.

The second division opens (C) with the great tribunal. The presiding judge (*Emma-oh*), a huge, red giant, richly robed and crowned, is seated behind a table, upon which is spread a leaf of the book of records. In his right hand he holds what appears to be a fan, a desirable article in the neighbourhood of so much heat; or it may be a sort of bat, with a blow of which he may intimidate the culprits or emphasise his summing-up. On his left hand are two assistants, one holding a scroll, and a blue demon, horned, tusked, and holding a ponderous club, the officer and messenger of the tribunal; on the right of the judge is the recording scribe, carrying a brush and a tablet covered with writing; near the scribe, and slightly in advance of the table, is an elevated stand, supporting two heads of very dissimilar aspect; one is that of a sad-looking female, the other that of a red demon, with piercing eyes and open mouth, from which latter issues a scathing stream, directed downwards upon a miserable being kneeling before the table. One can almost hear the hissing words of accusation. The writer in the *Theological Review*, alluded to in our note, describes the two heads thus:—"One with searching eyes and open, accusing mouth, is 'Seeing' (*Mi ru me*), an awful witness. The other, less active, is 'Hearing' (*Ki ku me*), pale-faced and thoughtful, waiting to reveal. These two are obviously watching to check the completeness of the confessions of several wretched wicked ones, who crouch, groaning and entreating, in front of the judge's table." The tribunal is held upon an elevated platform, from which steps lead down to the floor of hell. The awful realms of punishment are now entered, and the first scene met with (D) is that of a red, grinning demon, holding up a yelling terrified sinner to see, in a large mirror—the mirror of memory—a reflection of the crime which has consigned him to eternal perdition. We learn his crime from the scene dimly portrayed in the mirror, a farm-house in flames, and the incendiary speeding away through the darkness of the night, still carrying his burning torch. Adjoining the mirror, another red demon is weighing a sinner (E) against a ponderous rock, and watching with glee the effect of the weight of mortal sin which carries down the scale; and still further on, a green demon is hurrying away with a blazing chariot (F) full of agonised creatures whose immediate destination, burning as they are, appears to be a frozen lake—the "eight times cold" (*Hachi kan zigoku*)—where are shown struggling wretches endeavouring to keep their heads above the ice. Surely in *hachi kan zigoku* extremes meet, and the climax of torture is reached.

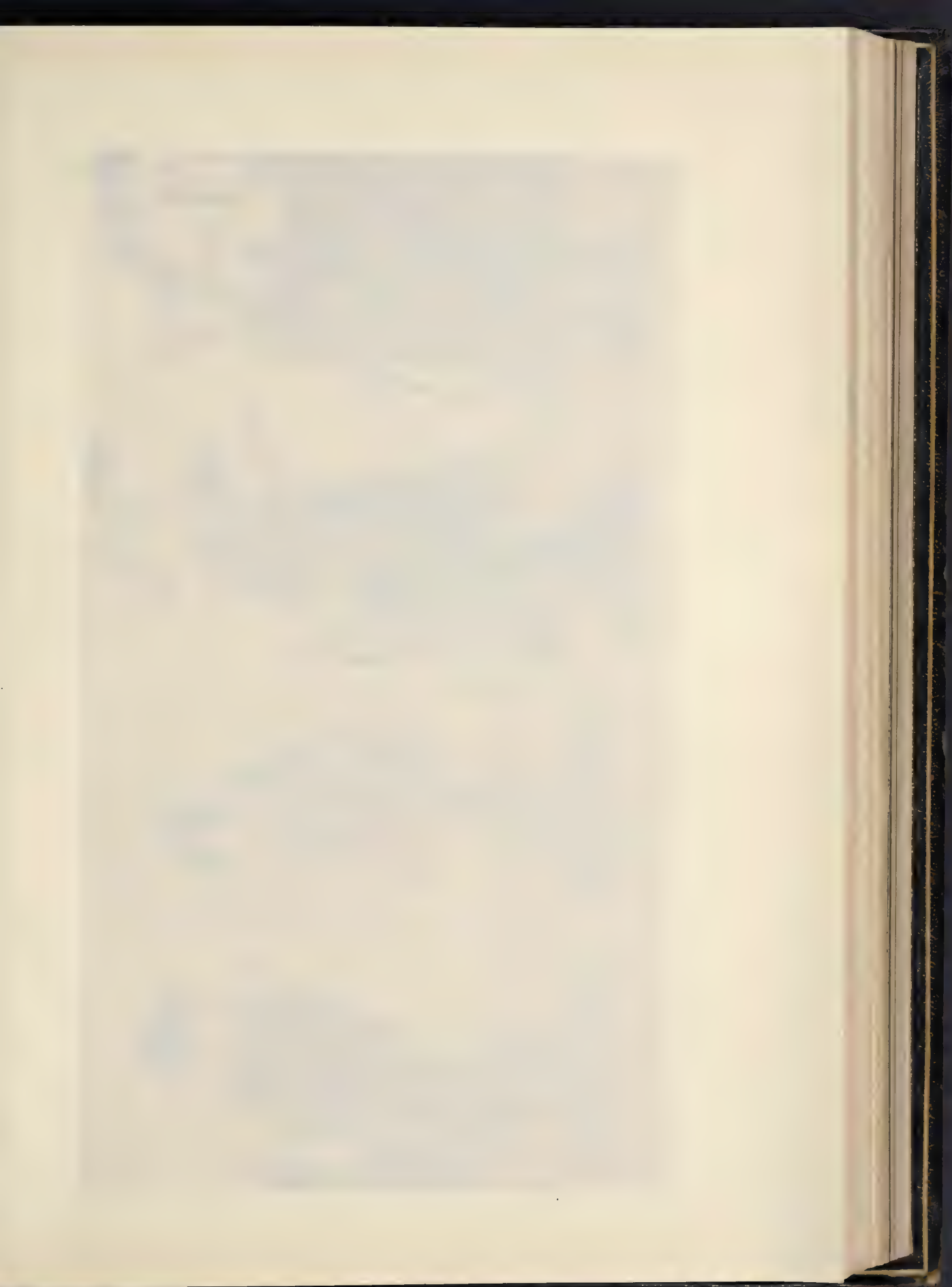
In the third division a new phase of torture is entered upon. It may appropriately be designated the division of blood, for in it are represented numerous wretched sinners beaten to pieces with a club wielded by a furious red demon (G), and torn by a bird-fiend; others cut and tortured with stake and knife (H), an operation at which a blue devil presides; others crushed between huge rocks (I); and, lastly, others pounded in a mortar (J) with an immense spiked pestle which is wielded by a green demon. All is horror and blood. The fearful punishments here depicted are rendered tenfold more horrible to the Buddhist mind by the belief that at every infliction the body is restored, to experience fully the recurring tortures.

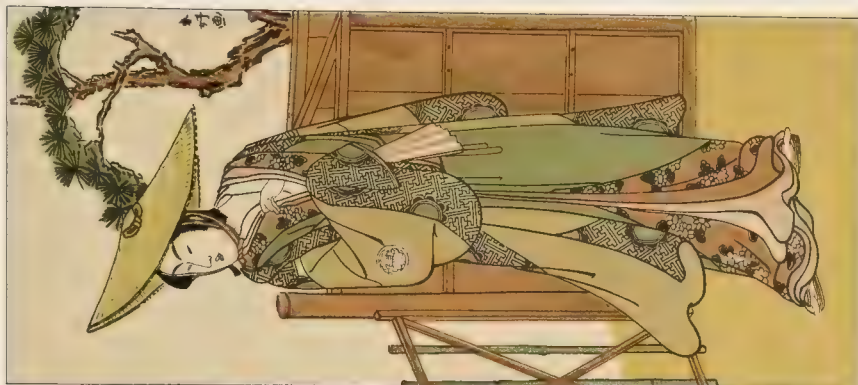
The last division, which may be called the division of flame, is the most fearful and imaginative of the series. It appears to represent a realm in which whirlwind, lightning, and flame struggle for the mastery, yet only render each other more potent in their mission of torture. In describing this division, the writer in the *Theological Review* says:—"This last design of all represents the final pit called 'Eight times deep'—a vast whirlpool of lurid storm, broken by awful streams of blood-red lightning—the whole scene seen through raging flames. On the outer edge writhe serpents, ever watchful to prevent escape. Within, a three-headed monster (L), girdled with skulls, whirls a flaming, red-hot club. Another, with a bull's head, gathers the miserable ones, and thrusts them bleeding into a mighty cauldron (M), that boils in the midst of fiercest fires; while over this finale of horrors there hang, head downwards, poor creatures whose anguish is even there enhanced by the fear of falling in. Over the abyss floats a gigantic head of Seeing (K), that terrible accuser, here glaring on each tortured sinner a too lasting recollection."

There is no descriptive writing attached to this thrilling picture of woe and horror; indeed it is graphic enough to render such unnecessary. On the external label is the single word *Kame* (tortoise), placed there, as we are informed by a Japanese scholar, simply with the view of diverting special attention, for these paintings are not now in favour in Japan.

In the possession of the AUTHOR.







Parasol, 1841



喜楽堂



喜楽堂



喜楽堂

喜楽堂 1841





Fig. 1. *Madame de*



Fig. 2. *Madame de*



Fig. 3. *Madame de*



Fig. 4. *Madame de*

SECTION FIRST.—PLATES XIV. AND XV.

COLOUR PRINTING.



THE eight figures on these two Plates are reduced but otherwise accurate reproductions from one of the earliest Japanese books printed in colours. The book, which is now extremely rare and held in high estimation in Japan, contains a collection of drawings by KATSUGAWA SHUNSHŌ and his pupils, and was published in the year 1775.

The subjects selected for illustration give a good idea of the style of drawing and the refined scale of colouring which characterise the entire work, and are all in the master's best manner. With such a beginning, we can only regret the falling off in both drawing and colouring observable in the later books of a similar class printed in Japan.

The size of the original prints is 12 inches by 5½ inches. There are two on each page, the book accordingly measures 12 inches by 11 inches. It is printed with great care on a close fibred and well made paper. The printing has of necessity faded somewhat, yet the general harmonious effect has in no way suffered by age.

In the possession of WILLIAM ANDERSON, Esq., F.R.C.S., of London.





SECTION FIRST.—PLATE XVI.

COLOUR PRINTING.



AN important collection of prints in colours, produced from wood blocks, was exhibited in the Japanese Court of the Paris Exposition of 1867: and one of the most perfect and interesting of the prints, from an artistic point of view, is represented in the present Plate. It is a beautiful example of the graduated printing which the Japanese have brought to perfection, and which we have already spoken of in the sectional article.

The subject selected by the artist is certainly one admirably adapted to display the process of printing. It is a spirit—a veritable “maiden of the mist”—visible, yet thin as air. The first condition is clearly marked by the force and richness of her coloured garments; while the second condition is made evident to the observer by the clever way she is depicted as passing through the spider’s web without breaking it. She appears to be rising out of the mist at her feet, bearing a *makimono* covered with writing, one end of which is held by a large spider—the weaver of the web. There is doubtless some curious Japanese legend attached to this interesting picture, but we have been unsuccessful in obtaining satisfactory information regarding it. A companion print may probably be, in some way, connected with the present ghost subject: and as it is also in our possession, it may be briefly described in this place. It presents the figure of a man, richly attired, and bearing on his back the skin of a huge spotted toad, the head of which, in an almost entire state, forms his headdress, its closed mouth and glaring eyes appearing immediately above his brow. In his hand is a *makimono*, unrolled, and entirely devoid of writing. The only object on its white surface being a jet black horse tethered by two ropes. The lower end of the *makimono* is held in the mouth of a grey rat. Is the tethered horse the crest

of the Prince of Soma, or does it allude to the marvellous legend of the ancient artist, Kanawoka, who is stated to have painted a horse which was so life-like that it actually became endowed with vitality, and used to leave the paper, and make sad havoc in neighbouring gardens, until, by a happy thought, it was tethered to its place by painted ropes?

Both the prints are on strong paper, and the colours are dense and evenly applied. The register of the numerous blocks employed is quite perfect. Blocks simply producing impressed patterns have also been used, as may be seen on examination of the Plate, where the patterns are faithfully reproduced. The original print measures 14 inches by 9½ inches.

In the possession of the AUTHOR.

SECTION SECOND.

EMBROIDERY.



SECTION SECOND.

EMBROIDERY.



THE Embroiderers of Japan have for centuries held an unrivalled position in their art, surpassing those of all other nations in the combination of richness of fancy, beauty of colouring, and skill in manipulation. The art of embroidery, like most of the ornamental arts in which the Japanese have excelled, was unquestionably of foreign introduction; but whether its introduction into Japan was due to Chinese or Indian influence, or at what date it was first practised in the country, are questions which appear unlikely to be answered in a satisfactory manner. We are assured, on good authority, that in the Mikado's collection at Nara are specimens of Indian embroidery twelve hundred years old. Speaking of these, Mr. Christopher Dresser, who had an opportunity of examining them, says:—"There are some grand pieces of Indian embroidery, in which the simplicity and purity of the ornament is delightful. These certainly surpass in tenderness of line, precision of form, and just distribution of the parts, anything that I have before seen of the kind; and they have been in Japan for twelve hundred years." Here we have a fact, based on historical records, which assures us that in the seventh

century Indian embroidery had found its way into Japan; but as we know that at

the same period, or indeed earlier, Chinese embroidery was in an advanced state, if not as perfect as it has been at any subsequent time, it cannot be definitely assumed that the art was originally introduced through Indian influence. It must be remarked that the earliest known examples of Japanese embroidery show no direct evidences of Indian art teaching in design or execution, while there is much that links them with Chinese examples of a kindred class.

From the earliest known epoch of the art, the embroiderers of Kiôto have been the most celebrated in the country, and they appear to have been invariably men, specially trained. Embroidery does not seem ever to have been an accomplishment acquired by Japanese ladies, or to have been cultivated as a home amusement. At the present time the embroiderers are men; and, although commerce with the West has done much to debase their art, there are still artists of great refinement of feeling and delicacy of manipulation to be found in Kiôto and elsewhere. The accompanying sketch by Hokusai shows three embroiderers at work upon a long piece of embroidery stretched in a frame.



FROM HOKUSAI'S *E-I-KIN* 1817.

The objects upon which the old embroiderers of Kiôto bestowed their greatest ingenuity and skill were *kimono*, or robes of ceremony; *obi*, or the long and wide sashes worn round the waist by the Japanese ladies; and *fukusa*, or squares of rich textile fabrics, used for covering ceremonial presents during their transmission.

The above three articles formed the most important part of the trousseaus of the ladies of the aristocracy; and their production engaged the unremitting attention of the best designers and embroiderers congregated in the imperial city during the periods of its greatness.

Of the primitive schools of Japanese embroidery we have little knowledge; but there is reason to believe that work of a high class was produced in Kiōto as early as the fourteenth century; and from that time until very recently the art has steadily progressed. Gorgeous court dresses were among the presents brought by the great Embassy in 1584; and the following passage, which occurs in the description of the Embassy from the East-India Company of the United Provinces, to the Court of Japan, in 1649, proves the common use of embroidery in connection with articles of dress at that time:—"Their prime Ladies, and high-going Dames, wear stately gorgeous Dresses, their Hair is curiously sleeck'd, and neatly turn'd up; and their Gowns are much fuller, and more flowing in thick and looser Folds than meaner Women, the Stuff not onely rich and costly, but Embroider'd all over with Gold, with a large Silken Scarf about their Necks, which meets athwart over their Bosoms: a Needle-wrought Girdle, rich with Silver and Gold, doth compass and keep in their well-shap'd Bodies: on their left hand a great Fan, with a long Handle, Painted with several Birds and Flowers, richly Gilt and Varnish'd: under their upper Garment, or Gown, which (as we said before) is so richly Embroider'd, they have seven or eight Silk Petticoats, every one a degree longer than the other, the longest trailing after them upon the Ground."*

Examples of seventeenth century embroidery have reached Europe; and, although they do not appear remarkable when compared with the works of later date, they display designs and treatment which are thoroughly Japanese in character and bear evidences of having been designed by contemporaneous artists. There is little doubt that the celebrated artist of this century, TANYŪ, and other members of his family, furnished designs for *fukusa* and other pieces of embroidery. In the possession of M. Louis Gonse, of Paris, is an embroidered *fukusa* of this period. It represents a crane in full flight above the sea, the waves being indicated in the simple and graphic manner peculiar to the Japanese embroiderers. The crane is rendered with great spirit in white and black silks, with beak and legs in gold. M. Gonse says this interesting piece was designed by YOHŌ, and reminds us of the style of TANYŪ; and that one sees in it the first use of the splashes or blotches of gold powder which modern artists have imitated with more or less success.

We find ample proof in the *Kōrin Shinsen hiaku-dzu*, or, "A New Series of a Hundred Drawings, by KORIN," that its celebrated author did not consider it

* *Atlas Japonnensis: being Remarkable Addresses by way of Embassy from the East-India Company of the United Provinces, to the Emperor of Japan*; by Arnoldus Montanus, translated by John Ogilby: London, 1670.

beneath his dignity to prepare designs for embroidery. The two illustrations, on this and the following page, are reproduced from woodcuts in the first volume of the last series (1864) of the *Kōrin Shinsen hiaku-dzu*. They were originally drawn by AGATA KŌRIN, the founder of the Kōrin school of pictorial art, who lived in the end of the seventeenth century. The description which attends the woodcuts directs that the designs of autumn grasses are to be executed in delicate colouring upon a short-sleeved dress of *habutaye*, a variety of white silk. The highly artistic treatment of the designs requires no comment, and knowing the skill and tenderness of the Japanese embroiderers, it is not difficult to realise the beauty of a dress so ornamented. The illustrations here given are of the front of the dress; the back portions are also given in the original book, and are of a precisely similar character and treatment.

The embroidery executed during the eighteenth century surpassed, in richness of design and careful execution, everything previously produced, and the most celebrated artists of the time lent their aid to the advancement of the art. Towards the latter part of the century, luxury in dress probably reached its highest point in Japan, and embroidery was lavishly used both on plain silk materials and on the gorgeous woven brocades of silk and gold. For the dresses of actors and courtesans, highly extravagant designs were produced and executed in the most brilliant colours and gold. For proof of this, we have only to examine the colour prints of KATSUGAWA SHUNSHŌ and his followers, produced between the years 1770 and 1800. The designs on the dresses worn by the aristocracy were of a rich and refined character, chiefly of a floral nature, embroidered in delicate, harmonious colours, upon crapes and thin silk fabrics of quiet tints. On the other hand, the theatrical dresses and those worn by courtesans were of the most sensational character, their designs





presenting every object which the popular artists of the time could press into service. Some dresses were covered with complete landscapes, in which rocks, waterfalls, trees, flowers, human figures, animals, and birds were depicted with wonderful skill and decorative effect.

Other dresses showed the sea lashed into waves and spray by the gambols of a mighty dragon wrought in glittering gold; or were covered with a net containing fishes and all sorts of marine creatures, most naturally rendered by the cunning needle. Others, again, were embroidered with flights of cranes or wild geese, masses of flowers and countless insects, or with such startling objects as octopuses, crabs, crawfish, tortoises, gigantic spiders, the *kirin* and *hōwō*, and demons. Robes entirely covered with snow scenes, moonlight pictures, sunset effects and rain storms, were frequently worn on the stage. Of the colouring and gorgeous contrasts of these costumes it is impossible to give a clear description.

During the latter part of the eighteenth century, the embroidery of *fukusa* attained the highest possible excellence. These dainty squares of the richest silk were made the recipients of the popular artists' many happy thoughts, and the most painstaking manipulation on the part of the embroiderers of the imperial city. When a *fukusa* is found with an inscription attached, it almost invariably records the name of the artist who prepared the design, not that of the embroiderer, as one would expect. The embroiderer, however skilled he might be, was simply considered as a copyist. He was much more than a copyist, however, for he had to translate the ideas of the designer, laid before him either in simple outline or in a very free style of brush work, in the laborious methods of his art, producing a picture full of the most subtle colouring and the most painstaking accuracy of detail. We need only direct the reader's attention to the *fukusa* represented on Plates IV and V of this Section,

in support of this statement. The geese of the latter example are embroidered with a skill in manipulation and a refined sense of colour almost marvellous. Indeed, it is not too much to say, that the result obtained in the lustrous silks is in this instance beyond the power of either water-colour or oil painting. This beautiful work was embroidered during the closing years of the last century. The decorative effect of the *fukusa* on Plate IV could not possibly be produced in any other known art materials. With such works before us, we are fully warranted in pronouncing the skilled embroiderers of Japan decorative artists of the highest order.

It would require a book of no mean size properly to describe a collection of Japanese *fukusa*; the variety of design and treatment they display is absolutely bewildering. Everything about them is so beautiful—the materials and refined colours of the grounds; the designs, so consistently decorative in disposition; the harmonious arrangement of the colours of the embroidery silks, heightened with flashes of gold; and the free accuracy of the different stitches employed. Truly, everything about them is beautiful, so much so that we are disposed to agree with M. Gonse when he says:—"Le fukousa japonais, mis sous verre et encadré, est le plus somptueux ornement que puisse faire entrer dans son intérieur le raffinement d'un délicat."

The designs commonly met with on *fukusa* consist of birds in all positions, fishes, insects, trees, bamboos, flowers, figures, landscapes, buildings, sea scenes with ships, rocks, &c.; while conventional devices, crests of the imperial and aristocratic families of the country, and, of course, the fabulous dragon, *kirin*, *hōwō*, and tailed tortoise are also pressed into service. In those embroidered with birds are found cranes standing or flying; falcons at rest upon their perches, or in full pursuit of or engaged in killing their quarry; ducks and geese swimming, standing or flying; hens feeding with their chickens; cocks perched upon drums; peacocks with their tails displayed; and the *hōwō*, flying, resplendent in its celestial colouring, and gorgeous with its magnificent tail plumage. The fish most commonly embroidered on *fukusa* is the native *koi* or carp. This the Japanese artists never fail to represent with wonderful spirit, swimming or swerving in the water or dashing up a waterfall. Among the most remarkable specimens of Japanese art known to us, are two representations of this fish swimming in still water. One is in the form of a black lacquer panel, on which the carp is depicted in dusted gold, as if indistinctly visible through the water. The wonderful rendering of this picture, and the artistic excellence both of conception and execution which it displays, are beyond the powers of description; and its delicacy is so great that a proper representation by any printing process is out of the question.* The other is in the form of a large slab of porcelain, on which the fish is painted with an ichthyological accuracy

*This work is in the possession of our contributor, W. C. ALEXANDER, Esq., of London.

and delicacy of touch which leave nothing to be desired. The representation of this beautiful piece is beyond the range of the present Work, otherwise we should certainly have given it a prominent place in our pages.*

When embroidered, the carp is usually of fine twisted gold thread, carefully laid over cording or some raised ground-work, so as to accentuate the scales and give an effective relief to the head and other parts. When represented swimming, it seldom appears straight: one of the most favourite positions is that of a sudden swerve, as shown in the accompanying illustration from a design by HOKUSAI, very probably intended by him for a *fukusa*. One can readily realise the beautiful decorative effect of such a design, with the fishes rendered in raised



FROM HOKUSAI'S *E-HON TEI-KIN Ô-KAI*.

gold, or in their natural colours flashed with gold, upon a ground of water-blue satin, and amidst glistening green algae.

Crabs and crawfish are also favourite objects on *fukusa*, the latter commonly being represented with great spirit in raised gold. Shells are frequently introduced.

The trees generally met with in these embroideries are the fir, the emblem of long life, and the *ume*, the emblem of springtime and happy youth. The bamboo,

* This unique piece is in the possession of A. O. WALKER, Esq., of Chester.

also an emblem of longevity, is a great favourite, its habit and the delicate character of its foliage rendering it peculiarly suitable for representation in embroidery. It is shown both in its summer and winter aspects: in the latter it appears laden with snow. Of the floral *fukusa* it is unnecessary to speak, beyond remarking that, although well executed, they are amongst the least interesting of the Japanese embroideries in this direction.

The *fukusa*, on which are depicted landscapes, sea scenes and buildings, present countless varieties of design and treatment. The designs are rarely, if ever, purely fanciful, the landscapes and sea scenes representing districts and views celebrated in Japan; and when figures are introduced in a prominent manner, the subjects are pretty certain to be historical, mythological or legendary. It is somewhat difficult, with our present limited knowledge of the country and its historical and legendary traditions, to make out the general subjects and points of interest in these clever needlework pictures, but a little painstaking enquiry is commonly rewarded by success. One instance of this may briefly be alluded to. A *fukusa* in our possession is embroidered with two peculiarly shaped rocks, of different size, standing up from what are evidently intended to represent the waves of the sea. The rocks are tied or connected together by large ropes, wound several times round them, from which hang, at intervals, double streamers or strips. Behind the whole appears the glittering orb of the rising sun, executed in spiral threads of gold, closely laid. For a considerable time this rather unusual subject, evidently not a fanciful one, remained open for enquiry. At last its import became known to us. During some investigations with reference to the Shintō faith—the oldest, and now the State religion of Japan—we found what appeared to be conclusive evidence that fire-worship was, and indeed still is, recognised by its votaries; and, as might be expected, that the great visible giver of light and heat was hailed with devotion and prayer. That this worship has not died out, is proved by the following facts.

Opposite the village of Futamigaura (Isé), and situated a few hundred yards from the beach, two rocks stand out of the water side by side, one of which is about twice the height of the other. For hundreds of years these rocks have been connected by large ropes of twisted straw, which fall in graceful curves from the higher to the lower. At intervals all along the ropes are pendant strips—the emblems of the Shintō religion—which wave to and fro in the sea breeze. The ropes with their emblematic fringe have been attended to, repaired, and renewed from time to time during many centuries, how many it is not in our power to say, and the custom still obtains. At certain times of the year, viewed from a platform erected on the shore, the sun is seen to rise between the rocks and underneath the festoons of Shintō emblems. At these seasons devout pilgrims visit Futamigaura for the purpose of worshipping the rising sun. Why these rocks have been selected and festooned with ropes as a framework for

the sun, while the object of special worship, still remains a mystery, but the ceremony clearly explains the meaning of the subject embroidered on the beautiful *fukusa* we have alluded to. Pictures and objects representing the sun rising behind the rocks are eagerly purchased by the pilgrims. We have in our possession a paper-weight, of blue and white porcelain, formed of a circular disk rising from a mass of waves, and behind the two rope-bound rocks. This was in all probability made for sale at Futamigaura.

On the purely conventional devices and the crests or family badges embroidered on *fukusa*, it is quite unnecessary to pass any remarks; they present no special features of interest, either in design or execution.

During the first half of the present century much beautiful embroidery was worked in Japan, as perfect in execution and, in many instances, as beautiful in harmonious colouring as any work of previous centuries. In fact, the greater proportion of the fine embroideries met with in European and American collections may be attributed to this late period.

Here our brief historical notes may end, for we have nothing to do with the purely modern school of embroidery, which simply aims at the production of showy, meretricious objects to meet a foreign demand.

With one or two unimportant exceptions, the stitches and methods of couching used by the Japanese workmen are similar to those met with in old European embroidery. This is easily accounted for by the fact that the early mediæval embroiderers derived their art from the east, and imitated the methods of execution presented by the oriental examples which came under their notice. Whether the birth and cradle of the art was in India or China will probably never be a satisfactorily answered question; but we feel certain it was from one or other of these countries that the art moved eastward to Japan and westward to Europe.

Of the ordinary stitches met with in Japanese embroidery, the most characteristic is that which has been called, *par excellence*, "the Japanese stitch"; it is long and usually taken in a diagonal direction. Both floss and twisted silk are used according to the effect desired. The stitches are taken with great regularity so as to fall side by side and as nearly parallel as possible. In embroidering the graceful, curved sweeps, of varying width, by which the Japanese artists so graphically represent waves and dashing spray, this class of stitch is invariably employed, and generally executed in fine white or pale blue floss silk. It is used for the white portions, representing snow, on the *fukusa* of Plate I., but in this instance thick and slightly twisted silk is adopted, doubtless with the view of better imitating the soft surface of newly-fallen snow. On the same *fukusa* the stitch, executed in fine floss silk, is successfully adopted for the black and white tail feathers of the cock. It also appears, in a slightly modified form, in the yellow and orange neck and back plumage.

The next variety of stitch requiring notice bears a strong resemblance to the one just described; it is the "feather stitch"—the *opus plumarium* of the mediæval embroiderers—deriving its name from the likeness which work executed in it presents to the soft plumage of a bird. The silk commonly used is a fine floss; and the stitches are laid long and short, and fitting in between each other, so as to appear to overlap. When skilfully done, the result is exceedingly soft and down-like. The most delicate gradations of colour and the roundest shading can be produced by the dexterous intermixture of silks of different tints. The beautiful geese of the *fukusa* on Plate V. have all the soft portions of their plumage rendered in this stitch. Rocks, trunks of trees, and similar objects, where many shades of colour are required and broken effects are aimed at, are commonly embroidered in a coarse variety of feather stitch, as in the *fukusa* with the sun rising behind the rope-bound rocks, previously spoken of. The rocks here are cleverly rendered in broad masses of broken colour; browns, greens, and blues combining in the most artistic manner, while their edges, caught by the rays of the rising sun, are in gold couching, intermingling with the coloured silks.

The Japanese embroiderers make effective use of "laid work" or "couching." This class of embroidery properly includes all work in which threads of gold or silk are laid side by side on the surface of the fabric, and stitched down to it by thin silk threads.

The gold used by the Japanese embroiderers is made of very narrow strips of gilded paper twisted round cotton thread. It has a very brilliant appearance, and seems to be fairly durable. Its nature prevents its being readily passed through a fabric by the needle, so it is almost invariably applied in the form of couching. There are not many varieties or patterns of gold couching met with in Japanese embroidery, perfectly plain and the "brick pattern" being most commonly introduced. Plain couching over raised grounds—cords and pads—produces very effective results, and in the representation of fish and dragons it is always used with the greatest skill. The dragon and the circular border of the drum on Plate I are for the most part in raised couching: the former is in high relief, with its scales, head and feet boldly modelled. The effect here obtained is increased by the judicious use of black paint, used to kill the glitter of the gold in the hollow portions, and accordingly to impart greater force to the shadows. In the same *fukusa* the comb of the cock and hen are in red silk couching.

To give some idea of the patience and skill displayed by the Japanese in gold couching, we may mention the case of the sun in the *fukusa* of the rope-bound rocks, which is a disc twelve inches in diameter, formed by closely and spirally-laid double threads of gold, secured with fine red silk stitches. There are about five hundred and fifty threads of gold in the diameter of this disc, and every one is laid with unerring accuracy from the centre outwards. In covering large surfaces with gold, the Japanese embroiderers do not adopt pronounced

diaper work and "basket couching" in the manner of the mediæval embroiderers; but, as we have already mentioned, the "brick pattern" very commonly appears, and in some instances a timid treatment in the direction of diaper patterns may be found, generally on the dresses of figures. Gold couching, in curved, spiral or wavy lines, is very commonly used in surfaces of considerable size; but it appears to be adopted with the view of producing a broken effect of light and shade, rather than an ornamental arrangement of lines and stitches.

A much greater use is made of laid work in silk by the Japanese than by the embroiderers of any other country; indeed, they appear to avoid passing the silk threads through the fabric whenever they can be successfully and effectually laid on its surface. This practice has one bad result—it makes the embroidery the very reverse of durable. The Chinese embroiderers, realising this, almost invariably use the stitches which require the threads to be passed through the fabric and carried across on its under-side. By this mode of procedure a large quantity of silk is expended and the maximum of durability is secured. The effect of much of the Japanese laid embroidery is highly artistic, especially when shaded or mixed twisted silk thread or floss is used. Most beautiful effects of broken colour are obtained from the shaded silks, which are skilfully dyed in greens, browns, tawny yellows, russets, low-toned reds, blues, etc., graduated into one another, and laid side by side without any regard to the tints which may fall in juxtaposition.

In addition to couching, there is another species of work very frequently adopted for surfaces of all sizes, and in some cases for entire compositions. The stitch employed is identical with that known in this country as the "knotted stitch" or "French knot," used by European embroiderers only in small spaces, most commonly in the centres of flowers. This stitch is made by bringing the needle up exactly at the spot where the knot is to be formed, then by winding the thread several times round the needle and passing its point through the fabric close to the spot where it was brought up: the right hand draws the needle from the under-side, while the thumb of the left hand keeps the thread in position until the knot is secure. Tedious as this process is, the Japanese embroiderers frequently adopt it for entire pieces of work, using fine and coarse thread according to the effect desired. They execute very large compositions of a singularly bold and decorative character, using for the knots a thick twisted thread of a size quite unknown to European workers. It is most probable that the Japanese learned this class of work from the Chinese embroiderers, who appear to have used it from very early times, and to have distinguished themselves in its successful manipulation. It is unnecessary to mention particularly the other stitches (very few in number) used by the Japanese, for they are either simple modifications of those already described, or such as are common to all schools of embroidery; one instance of the latter is the familiar "chain stitch" used by the Japanese precisely as by European embroiderers.

The Japanese embroiderers frequently introduce "applied work," or what is perhaps better known as "appliqué"; but, in high-class embroidery, not to the same extent as it obtains in mediæval and later European examples. Faces of figures are frequently produced by applied pieces of flesh-coloured silk fabric, cut to the required shapes, stitched to the ground, and modelled in slight relief over padding cleverly disposed and secured to the ground. The hair and moustaches are sometimes represented by strands of fine floss silk, the ends of which are left free, producing a most natural effect. In large faces a still more naturalistic appearance is given by the introduction of small convex pieces of glass painted on the under-side to represent the eyes. Dragons and fishes are frequently furnished with most expressive eyes in this way.

In conclusion, we may just mention that, by their cunning needles, the Japanese embroiderers impart most brilliant effects to the dyed and painted capes and other woven fabrics used by the native ladies for articles of dress. The introduction of small details in vivid silks and glittering gold, on their quiet-toned grounds, commonly patterned with white, produces an artistic result quite unknown in the productions of other countries. But this subject properly belongs to the following Section of our Work, and accordingly we may leave it for the present. For an instance of the introduction of embroidery for the purpose of imparting a special effect to painted work, we may refer the reader to Plate IX., Section First, and its attendant description.





SECTION SECOND.—PLATE I.

EMBROIDERY.



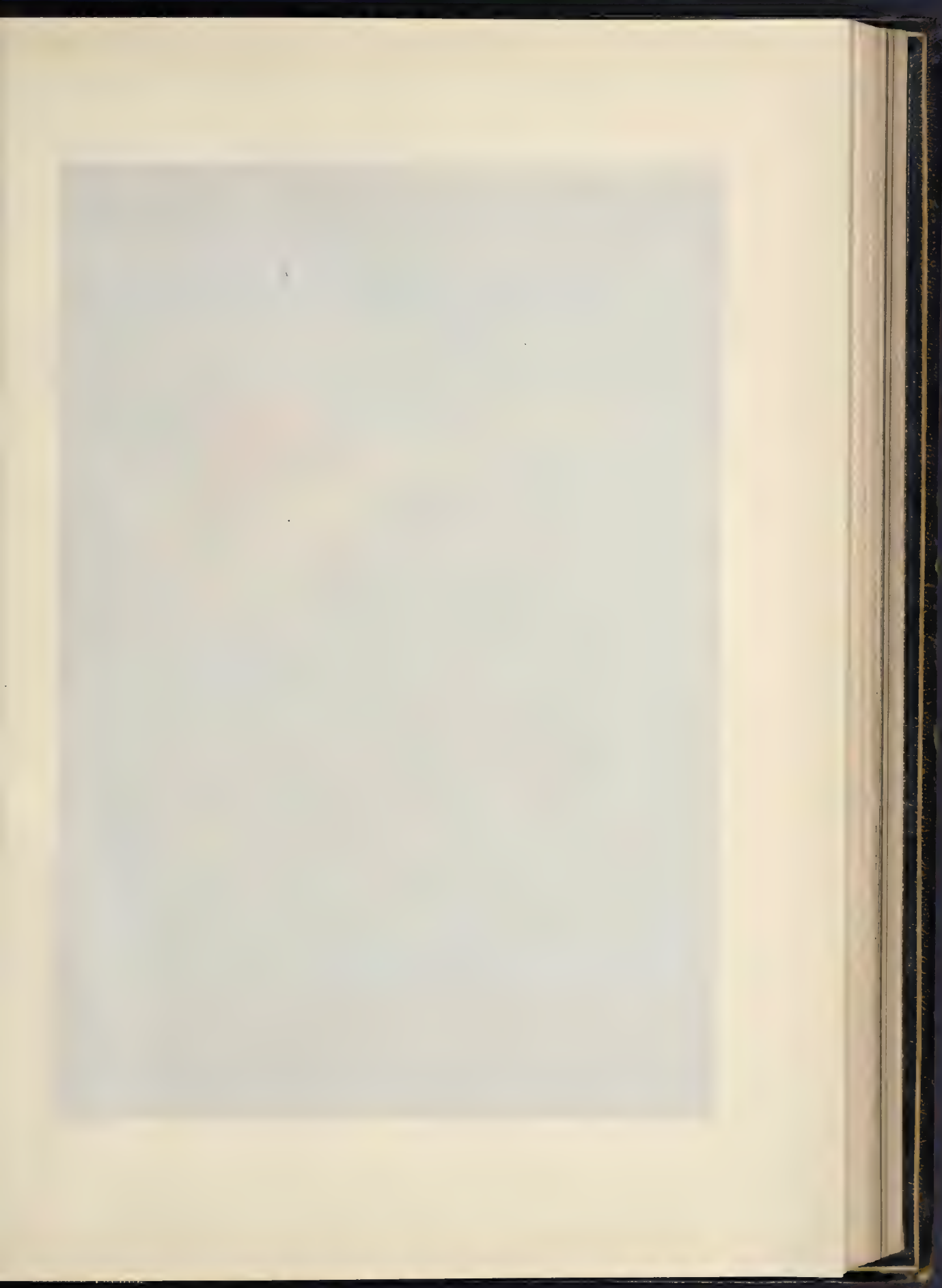
ICH embroideries in silk and gold have, for several years past, been exported in considerable quantities from Japan; the finest of these have almost invariably been in the form of *fukusa*, or the ornamental cloths used for covering ceremonial presents. The embroidery from which the present Plate is taken is a *fukusa* of dark blue satin, on which is worked, in silk and gold, a cock and hen standing on an elaborately ornamented drum. The treatment throughout is singularly bold; and the colouring and mode of rendering the several portions by different kinds of stitches produce a most effective result.

The representations of the cock and hen, which are so frequently met with in Japanese art, appear to be intended as emblematic of conjugal attachment and felicity. The representations of the cock perched on a drum allude to the story told of one of the ancient emperors of Japan, who caused a drum to be placed outside his palace gates for his subjects to beat and summon attention when they had any grievances to complain of; but the people were so contented and happy during his reign that the drum was never used, and became in course of time the undisturbed roosting place of a cock. The cock and drum, therefore, became the popular emblem of national peace and contentment.

The size of the portion of the *fukusa* represented on the Plate is $32\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 26 inches. The original is bordered in the usual manner with rich scarlet crape; but this has not been reproduced on account of the crude contrast of colour.

The border round the embroidery on the Plate is taken from a piece of Japanese silk brocade.

In the possession of E. MARSTON, ESQ., of London.





SECTION SECOND.—PLATE II.

EMBROIDERY.



RANES and tortoises, as popular emblems of longevity, are great favourites with the Japanese embroiderers, and form most appropriate embellishments for the ceremonial *fukusa*, conveying the wish that the recipient of the present which it covers may be blessed with long life.

Alluding to the crane, we have elsewhere remarked:—"The crane is held in a sort of semi-veneration by all classes of the community in Japan, and is, on account of its supposed long life, very generally accepted as an emblem of longevity. For these reasons, it is one of the greatest favourites with the artists of the country, and is introduced in ornamentation throughout the entire range of their arts. It is treated in countless ways; and, indeed, it is impossible to imagine any position the living bird could assume which is not depicted by the Japanese artist; and it is difficult to imagine anything more artistic, from a decorative point of view, than their manner of treating it in these varied positions. There is one rather remarkable fact in connection with the crane, which is, that the Japanese avoid representing it as dead. During many years' study of their art works, we do not remember once having seen a representation of a dead crane. This may satisfactorily be accounted for by the symbolic value attached to the bird—a dead crane would scarcely be an expressive emblem of longevity."

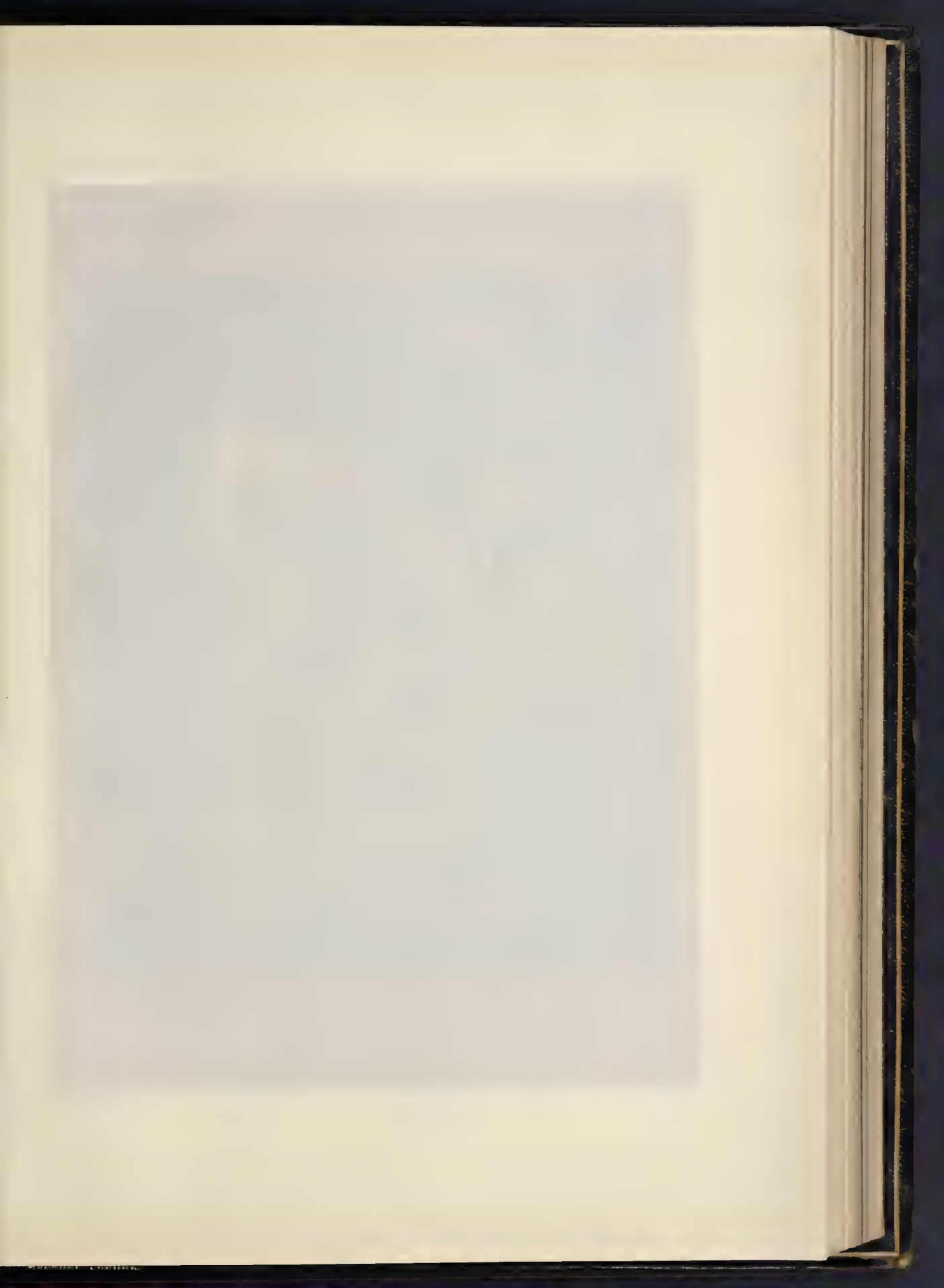
The tortoise commonly depicted must be classed amongst the fabulous animals. We have said of it:—"Of all chimerical animals the tailed tortoise is unquestionably the favourite, and the most frequently introduced in works of art. Unlike the other

fabulous creatures, which are altogether unnatural in appearance, and born of the imagination, it is perfectly natural in the form of its body, differing only from the ordinary tortoise by the addition of a long hairy appendage or tail. As this creature is not believed to be endowed with any supernatural gifts, it would, on that account perhaps, be more correct to call it an emblematical animal. The Japanese believe that the tortoise lives, under favourable circumstances, for several hundreds of years; they have accordingly accepted it as an emblem of longevity, and introduced it with that significance into every department of their art works. The tail indicates great age, and is supposed to grow only after the lapse of centuries; we have heard it said that the tailed tortoise represents ten thousand years of life, whilst without a tail only one thousand years is signified."

Both the crane and emblematical tailed tortoise are embroidered on the beautiful *fukusa* represented in the present Plate; the former flying across the red disc of the sun, while the latter floats on the rippling waves of the ocean. They appear as if conversing with one another—discussing the events of many centuries. The embroidery is most beautifully executed on light blue satin, while the sun is in *appliqué*.

The border is taken from a Japanese book of designs for textile fabrics.

In the possession of JAMES G. ORCHAR, Esq., of Broughty Ferry.





SECTION SECOND.—PLATE III.

EMBROIDERY.



THE quaintly treated and highly characteristic piece of Embroidery which forms the subject of the present Plate represents the "lucky ship" or the "ship of good fortune," a favourite Japanese idea, followed by another ship laden with packages of rice, and attended by the emblems of long life—the crane (*tan-chō*) and the mythical tailed tortoise (*kame*). In the lucky ship are the several emblems of prosperity and temporal blessings, prominent among which are the "purse of plenty" and the potent hammer of the god of riches, the good-natured *DAIKOKU*. On the sail of the lucky ship is the word *jiu*, signifying long life; while on that of the rice-laden vessel is the word *fuku*, prosperity or good fortune. The entire composition breathes a fervent wish for long life, prosperity, and happiness, and forms a most appropriate enrichment for a *fukusa*—the covering sent with a ceremonial gift.

This beautiful *fukusa* is richly embroidered in gold and coloured silks upon deep blue satin, nearly all the stitches commonly met with in the works of the Japanese embroiderers being present. The gold is "couched" with much skill, producing a most brilliant effect as the light plays upon it. The waves and spray are rendered in the simple conventional manner peculiar to the Japanese embroiderers in works of this kind.

In the possession of JAMES G. ORCHAR, ESQ., of Broughty Ferry.





SECTION SECOND.—PLATE IV.

EMBROIDERY.



THE beautiful *fukusa* which forms the subject of the present Plate is of rich light blue satin, embroidered with silk and gold, and powdered with gold dust.

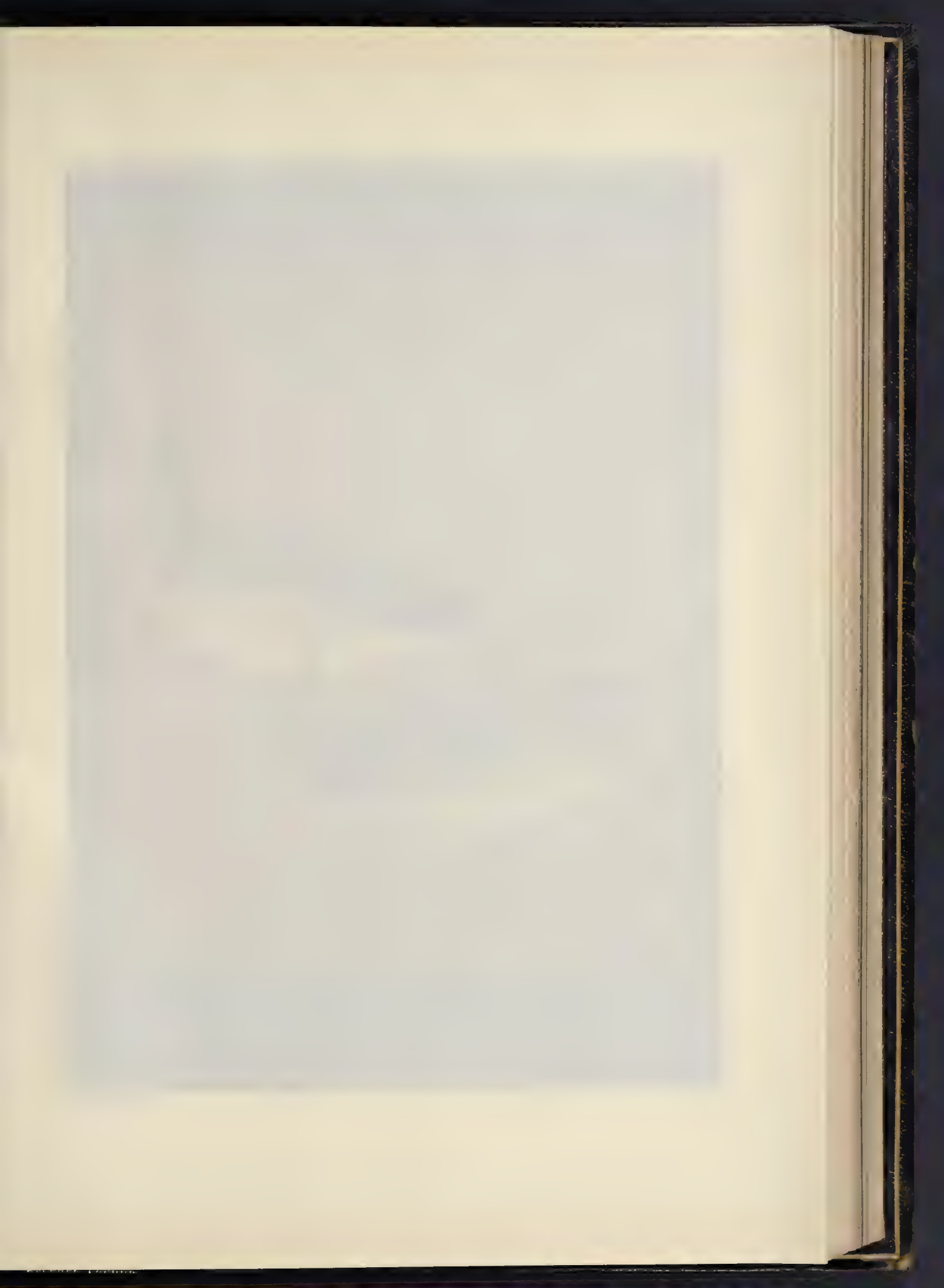
The three cranes are drawn with the usual skill of the Japanese artist: and the manner in which they are rendered in fine silk embroidery is absolutely faultless. The embroidery has been most carefully represented by our artist, as well as the refined system of colouring adopted by the embroiderer. The eyes of the birds are of glass.

The moon is cleverly executed in thin horizontal lines of gold, which glisten with every movement of the fabric; and the fleecy clouds are produced by gold dust fastened to the surface of the satin by sprinklings of some description of size or gum. The whole treatment of this interesting piece of work is characteristically Japanese and singularly successful and pleasing.

The size of the original *fukusa* is $34\frac{1}{2}$ inches by $26\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

The border round the Plate is taken from a silk and gold brocade of a simple diaper pattern.

In the possession of MONSIEUR S. BING, of Paris.





SECTION SECOND.—PLATE V.

EMBROIDERY.



VERY few of the specimens of the Japanese embroiderer's skill which have come under our observation are equal, in point of refinement of feeling and delicacy of colouring, to the *fukusa* represented in the present plate. The execution of the embroidery is absolutely faultless; and the stitches (*opus plumarium*) are laid with a skill and accuracy unknown even in the finest specimens of fourteenth and fifteenth century English or Continental embroidery.

The perfect representation of such marvellous embroidery is almost beyond the powers of chromolithography; but every care has been taken to do justice to the original in our reduced Plate, and the general effect of the colouring has been admirably secured.

The size of the original *fukusa* is 29½ inches by 24 inches.

The border round the embroidery in the Plate is from a piece of silk and gold brocade; the pattern is one of the simple interlaced diaper designs so much affected by Japanese artists.

In the possession of MONSIEUR S. BING, *of Paris.*





SECTION SECOND.—PLATE VI.

EMBROIDERY.



NOTHER embroidered *Fukusa*, of great beauty and interest, forms the subject of the present Plate. The design is a favourite one with Japanese artists—a trained falcon on its perch, under a fir tree. The ground of the *fukusa* is dark blue satin; and the embroidery is executed with the greatest delicacy and accuracy in floss silk and gold thread. The direction of the stitches, and the manner in which they are laid, are clearly indicated on the Plate. The bird is most beautifully rendered in white and grey silk, every stitch being laid with marvellous precision. The fir tree, conventional clouds, and the greater portion of the perch, are in fine gold couching; and the scarlet cords and tassels are laid on in relief. This is a characteristic work of the early part of the present century. The border round the embroidery is copied from a silk and gold tissue.

The *fukusa* measures 29 inches by 25 inches.

In the possession of MONSIEUR S. BING, of Paris.





SECTION SECOND.—PLATE VII.

EMBROIDERY.



REPRESENTATIONS of the peacock are great favourites with the Japanese artists, and are successfully given in nearly all branches of their decorative arts. They are cleverly rendered in their *kakemono* and screen paintings; on their large dishes and other articles of porcelain; on objects of lacquer; on *fukusa* and richly embroidered robes; and are also carefully modelled and cast in bronze.

The following remarks, which we have made in a preceding work on Japanese art,* may not be out of place here:—"The peacock is not a native of the Japanese islands, having been introduced there about two centuries ago. A story is told connected with its arrival in the country which runs somewhat as follows:—On the New Year's day festival a Prince of Hizen entertained at a banquet numerous distinguished guests, who had come to his court to pay their respects, and to compliment him in the manner usual on that day. The guests, after the entertainment, were asked to inspect the numerous presents made to the Prince, and expressed extreme admiration at two foreign birds which they had never seen before: these happened to be a peacock and hen. The Prince took occasion, while they were discoursing on the beauty of one bird in particular, to ask which of the two was the cock and which the hen. The gentlemen turning to the gaily dressed ladies, and desiring to compliment them, unanimously decided that the most beautiful must be the hen bird, while the ladies very modestly apprehended that the finest plumaged bird was the cock. 'You are right,' said the Prince, bowing to the ladies, 'Nature herself will have the male best clad; and it seems to me incomprehensible that the wife should have more pride and desire to go more richly dressed than her husband, who must be at the expense of maintaining her.' An excellent New Year's sermon, as Kämpfer says, for a heathen Prince."

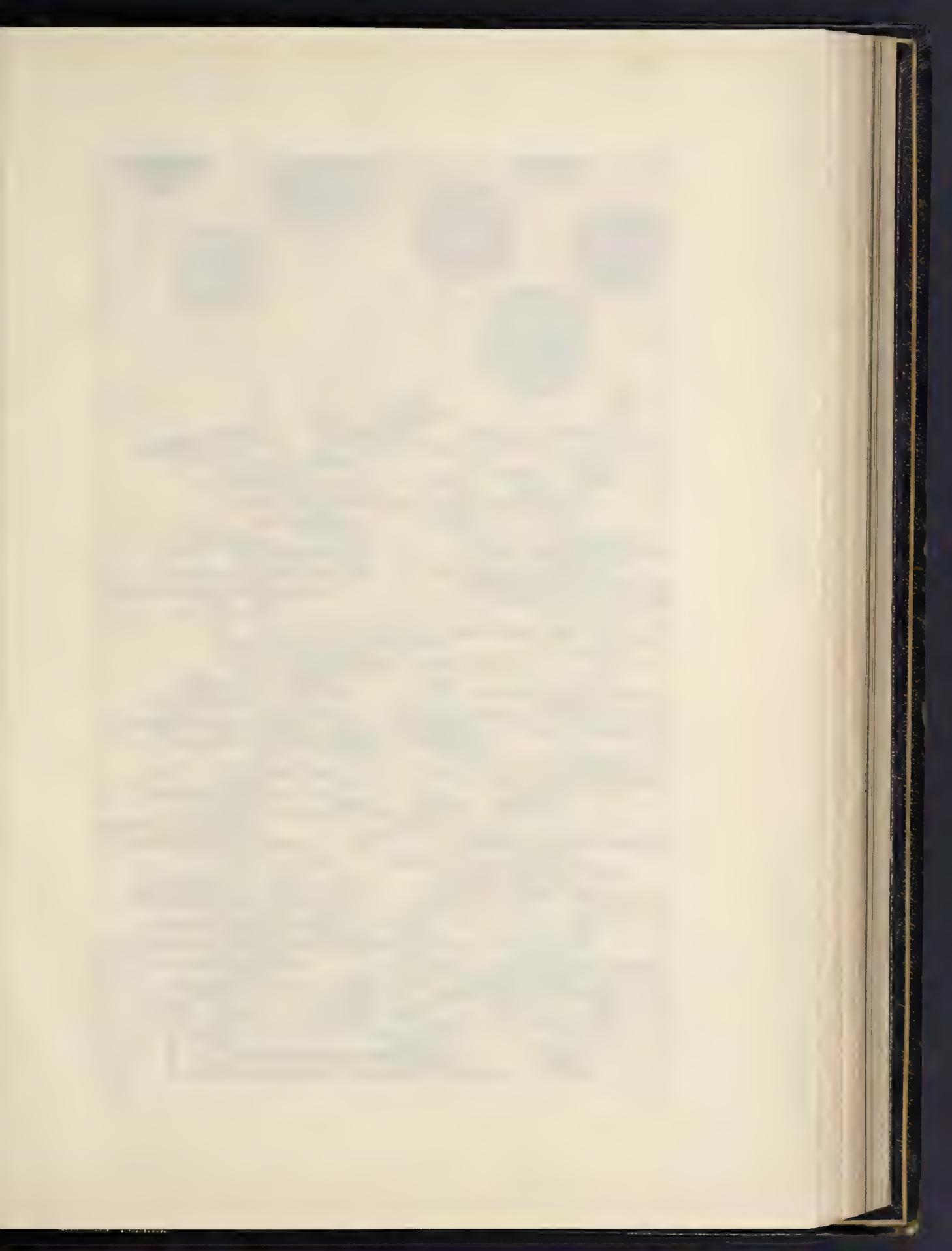
* *Keramic Art of Japan.* By G. A. Audsley and James L. Bowes.

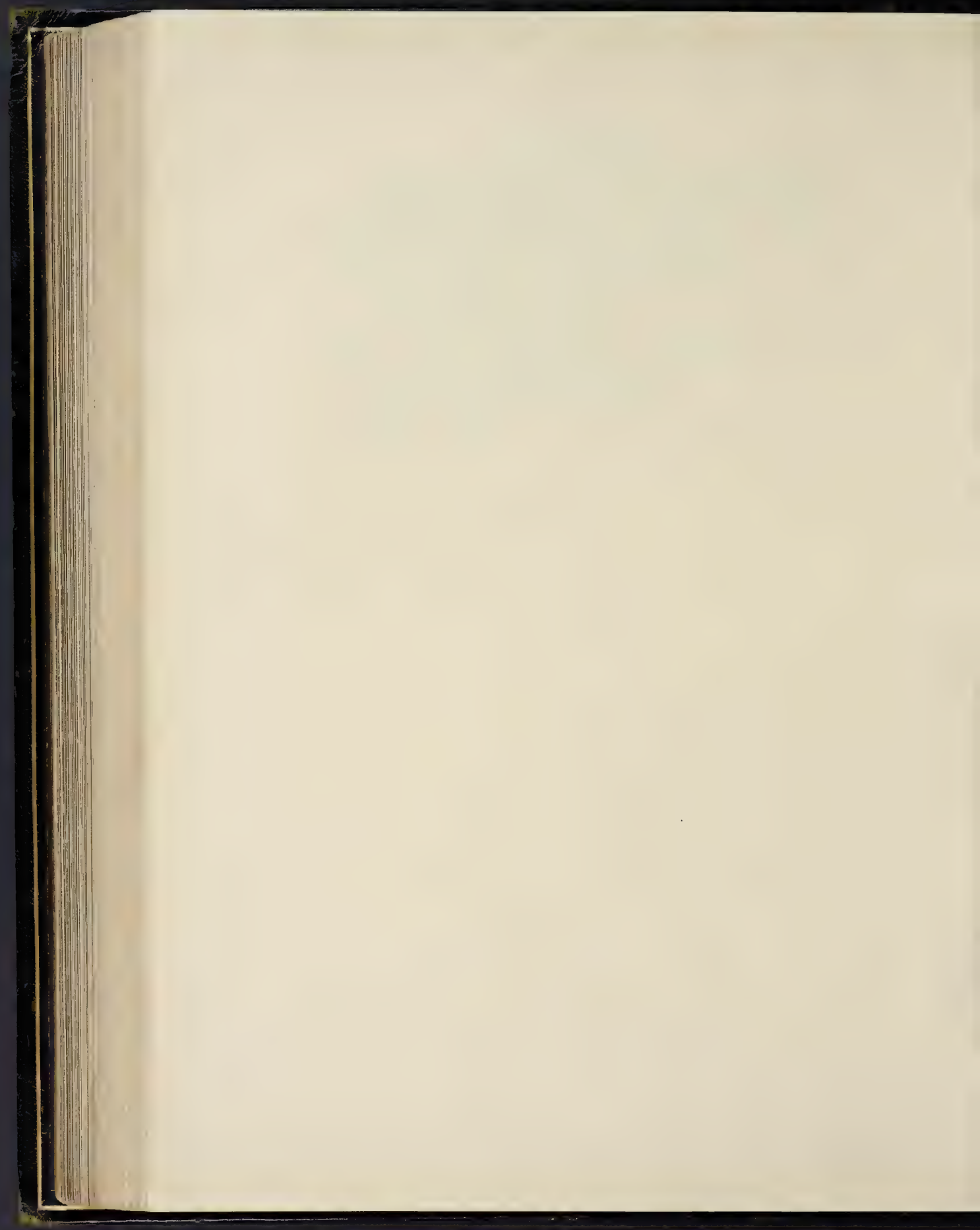
The piece of embroidered work which forms the subject of the present Plate is a *fukusa* of deep blue satin, dusted in places with gold powder, and enriched with a peacock and hen, a rock, and peony flowers. The feathers of the cock are laid in strong twisted silk threads and beautifully executed; those of the tail being in light brown and green silk and gold cleverly plaited together, with their eyes in floss silk. The feathers of the hen are in floss silk executed in the ordinary feather stitch. The eyes of both the birds are applied in glass. The rock is laid in plaited strands of silk and gold, the flowers are executed in floss silk, and the leaves in fine chain stitch. The entire work is of great beauty notwithstanding a feeling of hardness which characterises its general execution. In this respect it differs very materially from the embroidery of the *fukusa* illustrated on Plate V. of this Section.

The *fukusa* measures 30 inches by 25¼ inches.

The border which surrounds it is taken from a piece of silk and gold brocade powdered with the *kiri*.

In the possession of W. C. ALEXANDER, ESQ., of London.







SECTION SECOND.—PLATE VIII.

EMBROIDERY.



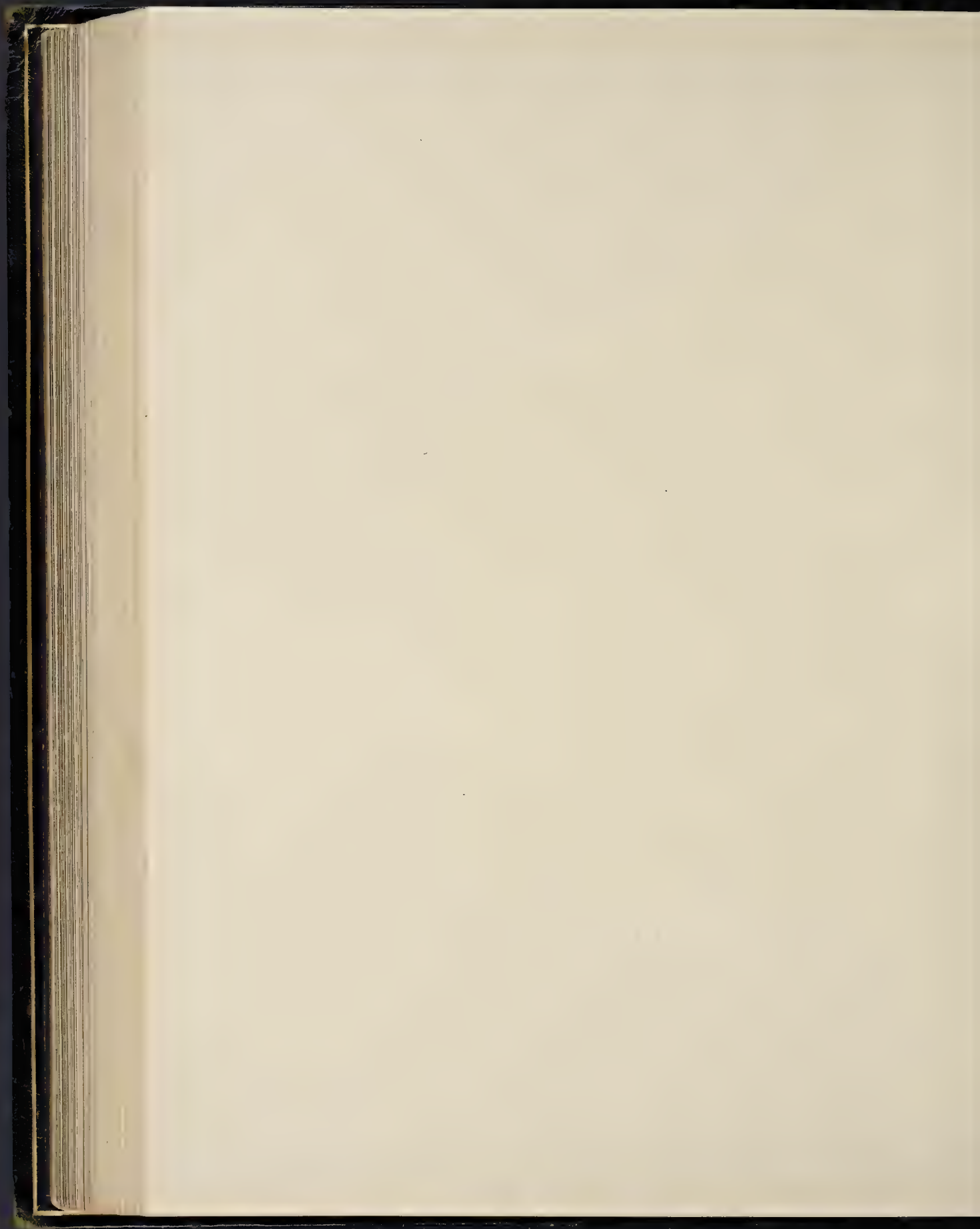
THE present Plate represents the principal portion of the back of a Robe of cream-coloured satin, richly embroidered with floss silk and embellished with flat gilding.

The whole of the lower part of the Robe is covered with floral designs similar to those reproduced in the Plate, while the upper part and the sleeves are powdered with circular medallions of different sizes, irregularly disposed, as indicated on the Plate. All these medallions are beautifully embroidered with crests and other devices on grounds of flat gilding. The whole of the embroidery is executed with the ordinary Japanese stitch in rich floss silks of varied colours. The flowers and leaves, throughout the Robe, are disposed and coloured in the most effective manner, producing, along with the powderings of medallions, a work of decorative art rarely equalled even by Japanese artists. The gilding is executed with thick gold leaf, laid on the surface of the satin previously prepared with some elastic size.

This Robe bears evidence of considerable age, and was in all probability embroidered during the early part of the last century. Old works of this class are extremely rare.

The width of the portion of the Robe represented is 27 inches.

In the possession of MONSIEUR S. BING, of Paris.







SECTION SECOND.—PLATE IX.

EMBROIDERY.



XAMPLES of Japanese embroidery executed upon gold grounds are extremely rare, indeed the one illustrated on the accompanying Plate is, so far as our knowledge extends, unique. It is a production we are informed on good authority of the latter part of the seventeenth century and was probably produced in Kiōto.

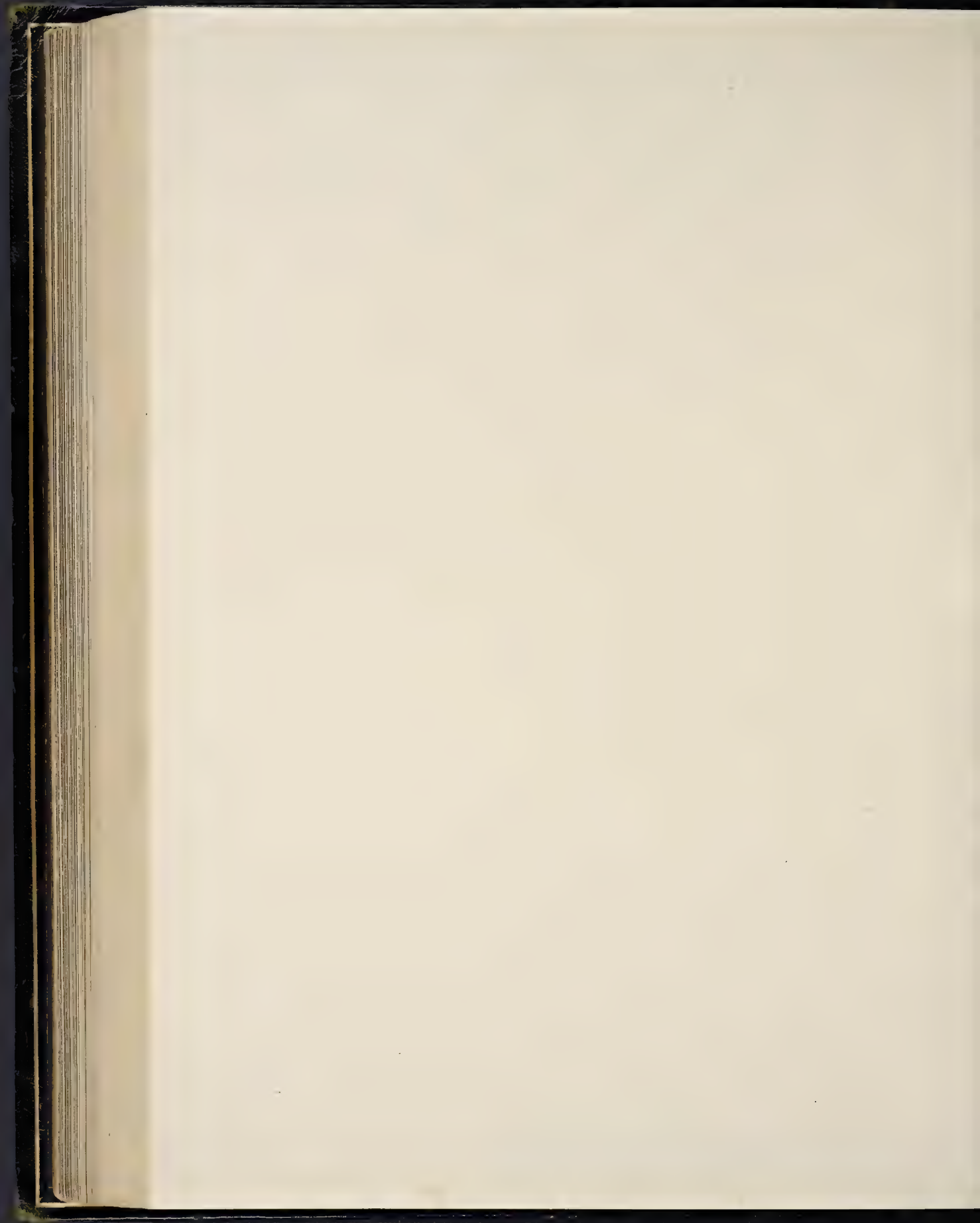
The fabric is of thin yellow silk entirely covered on one side with gold dust, fixed with some description of size. Pure gold has evidently been used, for, notwithstanding the age of the piece, it has not become tarnished. Much of the gold has, as might be expected, been rubbed off in places, but we have not thought it advisable to show such decay in our representation, although we have accurately reproduced the present state of the colours in the embroidery.

The embroidery is executed in rich floss silk chiefly in the ordinary Japanese stitch. The long threads which cross the leaves are fastened down by the veins, which are in common stem stitch. The petals of the flowers are also in long stitch, the threads being in most instances laid diagonally; and the centres of the flowers are diapered with crossing threads of twisted silk.

The design, which is on a large scale in the original, is singularly bold and effective, while the colouring is subdued by the nature of the ground.

The piece has evidently formed the back portion of a robe, as in the case of the embroidery illustrated on Plate VIII. of this Section. Width of portion represented 29 inches.

In the possession of MONSIEUR S. BING, of Paris.



SECTION THIRD.

TEXTILE FABRICS.

SECTION THIRD.

TEXTILE FABRICS.



ALTHOUGH the textile fabrics of Japan may not be so generally interesting, either from a technical or art point of view, as the productions of the greater and more distinctive art industries of the country; yet they well deserve careful consideration on the part of those interested in the processes of weaving and in the application of ornamental art to the productions of the loom. The first time Europeans had a favourable opportunity of forming correct ideas relative to the development of the textile industries of Japan was during the International Exhibition of 1862, where, thanks to the efforts and contributions of Sir Rutherford Alcock, a fine series of woven materials was shown. We specially record this fact here because in a previous Work we made the mistake of stating the first display to have been in the Paris Exhibition of 1867. Speaking of this fact and of the textile fabrics of the Japanese, Sir Rutherford says:—"Of textile fabrics and embroidery, a species of Art manufacture in which they have also achieved great excellence, I feel hardly competent to speak. Mr. Audsley is mistaken, however, in assuming that the first time Europeans had any opportunity of forming definite ideas about the state of the textile industries

of Japan was during the Paris Exhibition of 1867. They were very fairly represented in the Japanese Court of our own International Exhibition of 1862, and some of the

specimens are still in my possession. The robes manufactured for the Court in past years were models of beautiful work, both in design, colour, and texture, and many of those from the Tycoon's own looms were there. I agree with him, however, in the opinion that many of the commoner textile fabrics afford the best evidence of the essentially artistic feeling of the people and its universality. In some of the very commonest fabrics—towels and dusters of the least costly material—may be seen choice designs consisting of the simplest elements. A broken bamboo or two in 'counter-changed colours,' a flight of birds, or a few creeping plants, suffice in their hands to produce the most pleasing effects, as artistic as they are original. Were I more competent to deal adequately with this part of the subject, space would not allow me to give as detailed and elaborate an account of the textile fabrics of Japan as they merit from their extraordinary beauty and variety. From the thickest of satins, plain or decorated with designs in brocade, to the most gossamer-like gauzes, every combination of silk and gold thread has been carried to perfection by this people.

"It was the custom," continues Sir Rutherford Alcock, "for each Daimio to have his private loom for weaving the brocade with his own crest, which he and his retainers wore on their dress; and these brocades were either of satin, with the design in dull silk, or of combined silk and gold thread; sometimes stiff as cardboard, and quite incapable of making folds.

"They weave a thick striped silk, with a cunning arrangement of white strands, which give the effect of a bloom on the surface, like the soft down on plum or peach, through which we see the rich purple or red of the fruit. Thick crapes are made with plain surfaces, and also curiously wrought in the fabrication with folds or wrinkles in the material, as if in imitation of the skin of some animal."*

The collection shown in the Paris Exhibition of 1867 was large, and remarkably rich in the silk and gold brocades for which the Japanese weavers are justly celebrated. Most of the finer pieces were from the looms patronised by the late Shō-gun; and presented highly interesting designs and arrangements of colour. At the close of the Exhibition the entire Japanese Collection was sold; and the exhibits, including the many rolls of silk and gold brocade, delicate tissues, and figured velvets, were dispersed all over Europe; materially assisting the spread of the knowledge and appreciation of Japanese industrial art, and in giving a new direction and impulse to Western art thought so far at least as decorative design is concerned. We shall never forget the feelings of pleasure, surprise, and envy—of a very pardonable and harmless kind—which came over us as we studied the wealth of glowing fabrics spread out for our inspection. From that hour we have freely recognised the genius of the art-workmen of the islands of the far East; and have willingly learned such lessons from their beautiful productions as our Western training fitted us to receive.

* *Art and Art Industries of Japan*, by Sir Rutherford Alcock, K.C.B., D.C.L. London 1878.

Since the year 1867 several collections of Japanese textile fabrics have been exhibited in this country and on the continent; and large quantities have been sent to Europe in the ordinary way of trade: and it is not too much to say that the more one sees the more one wonders at the fertility of invention and the richness of imagination their designs present. So long as they are produced on true Japanese lines, and show no taint of Western influence or the crudity of modern European dyes, they are invariably satisfactory in the treatment of form and colour.

The writer in the Reports of the Japanese Commission at the Paris Exhibition of 1878,* speaking of the history of the textile industry in Japan, makes the following statements, which we presume are for the most part founded on sufficient authority: the first date he gives we think may be passed over as apocryphal. He says:—"So far back as the year 660 B.C. mention is made of the rearing of silkworms and the manufacture of textile fabrics. Hence we have reason to believe that at that time the industry was established; but what the methods of manufacture were we have no means of knowing. Historical records inform us that in the year 283 A.D. Korea sent to us two women skilled in the art of weaving: and in all probability the fabrication of figured textiles in Japan had its starting point at that date. The Court at once recognised the importance of this new industry, and established a special department to direct the fabrication of the stuffs suitable for its use. This administration, known first under the name of *Hatoribe*, finally assumed that of *Oribi*. This Imperial administration exercised a great influence upon the advancement of the manufacture, for there were very fine stuffs produced as early as the year 500. At Nara, in the temple of Tō-dai-ji, are still preserved brocades made seven hundred and fifty years ago: these are of great beauty and are proofs that at the time of their production the art of weaving was of long standing. Towards the close of the tenth century native industries had made great progress; and we feel guaranteed in declaring that that connected with the cultivation of silk and the production of fine textiles in the loom was no stranger to the progressive movement. From this date, however, up to the seventeenth century it languished under the disturbed condition of the country, swept as it was with civil wars and continued political strife. The seventeenth century, inaugurating a period of peace, allowed a renewed attention to be given to the industrial arts, and that of silk weaving rapidly assumed its old importance, and has advanced ever since.

"At a very remote date cotton seed was imported into Japan from India; but as the plant was badly cultivated it gradually disappeared. In the year 1550 the Portuguese reintroduced it; and since that time the cultivation of cotton has gradually spread throughout the country, at the present day occupying an important place in the national industries."†

* *Le Japon à l'Exposition Universelle de 1878. Publié sous la direction de la Commission Impériale Japonaise.* Paris 1878.

† As the enumeration of the several classes of textile fabrics produced in Japan and the localities of their manufacture is really outside the scheme of the present Work, devoted as it is to the Ornamental Arts of the country, it is not necessary

Unsatisfactory as this historical information is, it is all, apparently, the Japanese Commissioners were able to obtain on the subject; and forms one more proof of the meagre character of the records touching the industrial arts of Japan. The literature of Old Japan was not of or for the people; it consisted for the most part of historical legends and poetical writings from the pens of those in high places; and such being the case, it can hardly be expected to contain either dry historical data or practical information relative to the manufactures of the country.

The construction of the looms and the modes of weaving in Japan appear to have been from the earliest period of the simplest character; but, judging from the examples we have of the rich and beautiful old fabrics produced by such primitive appliances, great credit is due to the native weavers by whose manual dexterity, care, and taste such artistic materials were produced. The loom employed in weaving the plain cloths of the country differs in no essential point from the old hand loom used in Europe, although its construction, or the mode of putting together the parts, is far less substantial.

If a piece of plain cloth be examined it will be found to consist of two series of threads running at right angles to each other: that which proceeds in the direction of the length of the piece being called the warp, whilst that which runs in the direction of the width is designated the woof or weft. Other names are given to both these

for us to follow this writer any further; yet, as the Reports from which we have quoted are not readily accessible to our readers, we here append the additional notes in their original form.

"On sait maintenant que le Nishijin à Kioto est le centre principal de la fabrication des tissus et que les étoffes de valeur, telles que le *Karaori*, le *Yamato nishiki*, le *Tsuzureori*, le *Donsu*, le velours, etc., viennent toutes de là.

"La quantité d'étoffes fabriquées, y compris le *Chirimen* et le *Habutae*, s'élève à un million six cent trente six mille tan, représentant une valeur totale de trois millions cent quatre-vingt-dix mille yen. Kirin, dans la province de Kozuke, est aussi un des plus anciens centres de cette industrie. Tombée en décadence, elle reconquit son ancien prestige vers l'an 1500, et depuis la fabrication augmente chaque année. Kirin produit annuellement mille cinq cent trente-six mille tan, dont la valeur est un million huit cent vingt-neuf mille yen. Les étoffes connues sous le nom de *Sékoori*, *Haki ta ori*, de *Miadju*, province de Rikuzen; les *Hakata-ori* de Fukuoka, province de Chikuzen; le *Chirimen* de Nagahama, province d'Omi; de *Gifu*, province de Mino; de *Mineyoma* et *Miadju*, province de Tango; de *Himeji*, province de Harima; de *Matsumoto*, province de Shinano; les *Kano Kosi bori*, de *Kito* et de *Hagi*, province de Yamato; les *Gumai* et *Kayikiori*, province de Kai; les *Yukitsu mugi*, de la province de Shimosa; diverses étoffes de *Hachidji*, de *Chichibu*, province de Musashi; les *Hosha Humagi*, province d'Echizen; les *Uedaoro*, province de Shinano, sont les plus renommées.

"Une usine à vapeur a été fondée tout récemment à Sakai, province d'Izumi, pour y fabriquer des étoffes de coton.

"On fabrique ce genre d'étoffes façonnées ou unies dans les localités qui suivent: *Yuki*, province de Shimosa; *Osaka*, province de Setsu; *Hiroshima*, province d'Aki; *Shimodaté*, province de Hitachi; *Yoshida* et *Nishiwo*, province de Mikawa; *Kakegawa*, province de Totomi; *Matsumoto* et *Takato*, province de Shinano; *Nishida*, *Ohno* et *Maruoka*, province d'Echizen; *Kashiwa bara*, province de Tamba; *Totori*, province d'Inaba; *Himeji*, province de Harima; *Koga ichi*, province de Suwo; *Matsugaka*, province d'Ise; *Rodota* et *Kokurá*, province de Bungo.

"Les deux étoffes nommées *Mompa* et *Unsei* se fabriquent dans les provinces de Kii et d'Izumi.

"Comme nous ne voudrions pas fatiguer le lecteur en énumérant tous les centres de fabrication, nous n'avons donné ici que les principaux. Les deux sortes de toiles fabriquées avec le *Bochneria* ou le chanvre ordinaire viennent en général de *Shiwoawa*, *Takaichi*, *Kosendani*, etc., dans la province d'Echigo. On a fabriqué également à *Nara*, province de Yamato, à *Shikumi mura*, province de Shinano, et dans les provinces de Kai, Omi, Kaga, Echizen, Inaba, Suwo, Tosa, Bungo, Tajima, etc. Il y a un genre spécial d'étoffes que l'on désigne sous le nom de *Moji*, qui se divise en toiles et en cotons. Ces *moji* jouissent d'une grande réputation et viennent de *Tsu*, province d'Ise. L'étoffe nommée *Shifu* est fabriquée avec des chaînes de coton et des trames de papier; c'est un produit renommé venant de *Shiraishi*, province d'Iwaki. L'étoffe dite *Kudju*, de *Kakegawa*, province de Totomi, est fabriquée avec le *Pueraria Tumbergiana*, et du coton; le premier sert à former les trames; le second, les chaînes. On fabrique aussi une étoffe avec le *Tilia cordata* et le *Histeria chinensis*, ainsi que le *Hibiscus syriacus*, etc., mais elle est fort répandue."

series of threads, but it is unnecessary to give them here. In the simplest style of weaving, such as that employed in producing the common cotton fabrics of Japan, the woof threads are passed alternately under and over the threads of the warp; and this is done in a loom which comprises an appliance for stretching evenly and side by side all the warp threads; a mechanical contrivance for raising and depressing alternately the odd and even numbered threads of the warp throughout the entire width of the series, so as to allow the passage of the shuttle, carrying the woof thread, between them; and, lastly, a contrivance for beating each successive woof thread, delivered by the shuttle, close to the thread previously thrown, and for supporting the shuttle while thrown to and fro. The loom is constructed of posts and beams of wood framed together in such a manner as to support the contrivances just mentioned. The warp is wound round the yarn beam placed at the further end of the framing, and attached at the nearer end to another roller called the cloth beam, round which the woven fabric is wound as it is produced. Between these two beams the warp threads pass through the healds or heddles, which consist of a number of twines with loops in the middle for the reception of the warp threads. The twines are attached to rods above and below the warp. The healds are two in number so as to divide the threads equally for the passage of the shuttle, as before mentioned; they are connected above by cords passing over a small roller or pulleys, called the harness, and below they are attached to long pieces of wood operated on by the feet of the weaver, and accordingly called treadles. Between the healds and the cloth beam the warp passes through the vertical openings or spaces of the reed—the comb-like appliance by which the woof threads are beaten against each other. The reed is fixed in a swinging frame, called the lay or batten, which carries, close to the reed, the shuttle-race: along this race the shuttle is thrown from side to side by the weaver's hands. This simple loom seems to be common to all countries; and although differing somewhat in form in different places its principles of construction are invariably the same. In the Japanese looms the cloth beam is not always supported by the framing, as in our old looms; for in a drawing in our possession a female is represented weaving with the cloth beam lying across her knees, and held in position by two cords attached to the board on which she is sitting. The loom has two healds; and the lay is suspended by cords carried through a bamboo in the centre. In this drawing the woman is engaged in weaving a very narrow fabric, in all probability some dainty silken tissue or crape, in the production of which the Japanese have few rivals. But there is no doubt that the same form of loom and the same method of using it are adopted in the weaving of the common cotton fabrics used so largely throughout the country for towels and the dresses of the poorer classes.

When we come to examine these common cotton stuffs, our attention is quickly diverted from all considerations connected with the weaving thereof to the artistic manner of their ornamentation by dyeing and printing. In point of manufacture they are far inferior to the cotton goods produced in this country; indeed, the fabrics woven

in the native looms are extremely loose and uneven, and would be almost useless to us for any of the purposes to which we put cotton materials. With the late introduction of spinning machinery and power-looms of course a new era commenced in the Japanese cotton industry; but with that aspect of the matter we have absolutely nothing to do in a Work professedly dedicated to the Ornamental Arts.



JAPANESE BLUE AND WHITE TOWELS.

From an artistic point of view, probably the common towels of the country are the most worthy of note. Chiefly in blue and white, dyed or printed, they present designs in endless variety, invariably striking and pleasing in character. It will be

observed from the quotation given in the opening pages of this Section that Sir Rutherford Alcock agrees with us, in the opinion we have expressed elsewhere, that many of the commoner fabrics, including these towels, "afford the best evidence of the essentially artistic feeling of the people and its universality" which can be met with in this direction. He alludes to certain designs, such as a bamboo or two in counter-changed colours, a flight of birds, and a few creeping plants; and justly remarks that in the hands of the native workmen they suffice to produce "most pleasing effects, as artistic as they are original." The illustrations on the preceding page show two designs of the class alluded to. They are taken from towels, of the commonest kind, in our possession—simple strips of coarse open cotton cloth measuring about 34 inches in length by 12 inches in width. The illustrations are coloured after the originals. Such towels are made in large quantities in the villages of Arimatsu and Narumi, near Nagoya, and in several other places throughout the country.

The processes by which patterns in one colour are usually given to such cotton fabrics in Japan differ from those commonly adopted in Europe. They group themselves under three heads, namely, staining, dyeing, and stencilling.

The process by which fabrics are stained with ornamental designs may be termed *negative* block printing; for the blocks employed, although cut in a fashion somewhat similar to those used for hand printing by us, are made to impart the stain or colouring material in exactly the opposite way to that which has always obtained in Europe, and which may be correctly designated *positive* block printing. With us the design is left in high relief by cutting away, to a considerable depth, the surface of the block around the figures; and the patterns in relief are charged with colour and applied with pressure to the cloth. The Japanese calico printer proceeds in a very different manner. His blocks are prepared to produce two effects—a white pattern on a coloured ground and a coloured design on a white ground—in the following manner. A block of wood is taken of the size necessary for the complete design, and the pattern is drawn or transferred to its smooth and perfectly flat surface. The carver then cuts away the ground around the pattern to a considerable depth, keeping the edges of the portions left in relief very sharp and clean, and leaving the depressed parts perfectly smooth. When all this has been done to his satisfaction, he bores holes from all the depressions through to the other side of the block, forming them into funnel-shaped openings from that side; finally varnishes the whole to resist the action of water, and hands the block to the printer, along with another piece of wood of somewhat larger size perfectly flat and smoothly planed on one face. It will be observed that, except in the matter of the funnel-shaped holes, this block is precisely similar to the one used by the old calico printers in Europe; but, as we shall now show, the manner of manipulating it is widely different. The Japanese block has been cut as described with the view of producing a white pattern on a coloured ground, such as that on the lower portion of one of the towels we have illustrated, and the mode of using it is as follows. The printer takes a white towel or other piece

of cotton cloth and stretches it tightly on the smooth surface of the plain block; he then places the figured block, face downwards, upon the fabric and tightly clamps the two pieces of wood together so as to bed the relieved design well into the cloth. When this is done he pours the coloured stain or dye through the funnel-shaped holes until it fills up all the depressions on its under surface. The stain immediately saturates the exposed portions of the cloth, but does not touch the parts which are tightly squeezed between the raised pattern and the flat surface of the under block. The whole is then inverted and the surplus stain allowed to run out through the holes. After enough has drained away to prevent the possibility of the stain spreading in the cloth of its own accord, the blocks are disconnected and the fabric removed to be dried and fixed.

When the required design is to be rendered in colour upon a white ground by this process, the block is prepared in the reverse manner; instead of the pattern being left in relief, as in the previous case, it is sunk from the surface of the block and provided with the funnel-shaped holes. The fabric is pressed between the blocks and the stain poured into the depressed pattern in the way above mentioned.

To us, familiar as we are with the simple processes of block printing as practised in Europe, the Japanese method appears clumsy and unnecessarily complicated; but before we condemn it, it is advisable to ask ourselves if there may not be some good reason for the adoption of the *negative* process, as we have ventured to call it. If we examine a fabric printed in the European manner we will find that the colour is full and bright on one side only; and that on the other side merely indistinct traces of it show themselves. But when we take up a Japanese towel, patterned in the manner just mentioned, we find that the colour has gone entirely through the fabric, and that the pattern is equally distinct on both sides. Here, then, we have the whole and sole reason explained for the adoption of the seemingly awkward Japanese method. Both the towels we have illustrated were produced by the means briefly described, and they are precisely the same on both sides as regards intensity of colour and distinctness of design. Of course the Japanese are perfectly familiar with the ordinary or *positive* process of block printing; and use it freely whenever it is suitable for the material to be ornamented and the effect desired: but as this mode of printing is familiar to everyone it is unnecessary to describe it here.

The Japanese produce designs in single colours by dyeing combined with the use of "*resists*" and "*discharges*." When the pattern is to be given by a "*resist*," a material which has the property of resisting the action of the dye is applied to the fabric by the previous process of printing, or by stencilling, and the whole is immersed in the dye vat. When the piece has remained long enough to thoroughly absorb the dye, it is taken out and washed; under this treatment the "*resist*" is removed, and the pattern appears white on a ground of uniform colour. Mr. Dresser, in his recent book, describes a rather curious method sometimes resorted to by the Japanese; he says:—"Let us suppose that a little figure—say a leaf—has to be

distributed in green colour over the surface of a fabric, a thing which could obviously be done by the use of a small stencil plate and a brush with a little green colour. But the Japanese have a labour-expending process (not a labour-saving method) by which they achieve this result. They cut a series of leaves, all of the same shape and size, in paper, and instead of using the sheets from which the leaves have been cut as so many stencil plates, they take these paper leaves themselves and arrange them upon the cloth in the manner required. Now holding a leaf with a finger of the left hand, and with a sort of trowel in the right, on which rests a quantity of 'resist,' they so spread the 'resist' that the leaf is buried, as well as the cloth intervening between the leaves. Leaf after leaf is covered in the same manner, care being taken that the 'resist' does not get under the edges of the paper. Each leaf, which is just visible through the 'resist' with which the fabric is covered, is picked up by a needle point; hence at these particular places the fabric is clean. The 'resist' is now dried, the fabric is dipped in a green dye vat, by which the leaf-like spaces assume their colour. The cloth is now exposed to the steaming process which is so familiar to us, and is then washed; thus the 'resist' is removed, and we have a series of green leaves figuring a white surface." It is certainly somewhat difficult to imagine a satisfactory reason for the adoption of a process so inconvenient and roundabout as this one certainly is, for, as the author just quoted remarks, the same result could be readily produced by the application of the green dye by means of a brush and stencil plate.

Fabrics dyed a uniform colour are also figured by the action of "discharges"—chemical substances which attack and destroy the colouring matter in the fabric. The "discharge" is applied either by the negative process of block printing, being poured through the holes in the block, or by being rubbed into the fabric with a brush and stencil plate. When the action of the "discharge" is complete, the fabric is well washed and dried. This process requires care to prevent the "discharge" injuring the threads of the fabric.

The Japanese are very skilful both in the preparation and use of stencils. They cut them from very tough paper and saturate them with lacquer so as to resist the action of the moist dye. The stencil is laid upon the fabric, which has been previously stretched upon a smooth board, and the dye is rubbed through its openings with a stiff brush. By this simple process the colour is driven well into the fabric and the pattern appears on both sides.

It is unnecessary to follow the subject of cotton fabrics and the methods of ornamenting them to any greater length here, for the space at our disposal is limited, and the manufacture and artistic treatment of the important silk textiles of the country press for as full a review as is possible at our hands.

There can be no question that for several centuries the culture, preparation, dyeing, and weaving of silk have been carried to the greatest perfection in Japan. Silken fabrics have, in all the great periods of the nation's history, been lavishly

used for the costumes of the wealthy classes and for objects of ceremonial use. The abundant supply and fine quality of the raw material, and the artistic skill of the dyers and weavers, working directly under court patronage and government supervision, could not fail to produce results noteworthy in the annals of weaving. About the end of the sixteenth century the fame of the Japanese weavers first reached Europe, for many gorgeous court dresses were among the presents brought home by the officials of the great embassy of 1584. Long before that time, however, Japan had mastered all the technical difficulties connected with the industry; and was in possession of all the mechanical appliances requisite for the production of the most elaborate and complicated patterns in colours and gold. There is every reason to believe that so early as the thirteenth century rich brocades were manufactured in the city of Kiôto: we have seen and handled specimens stated on good authority to belong to the fourteenth century. Monsieur Bing, of Paris, to whom we are greatly indebted for so many valuable contributions to the Plates of the present Work, collected during his recent visit to Japan many beautiful and highly interesting specimens of early weaving; and among these are several believed to be of fourteenth century date—fragments of rich textiles which show a complete control over all the processes connected with ornamental silk weaving.

M. Louis Gonse, in his recent book on Japanese art, says:—"There is no doubt that the different processes of manufacture were brought from China; it is perhaps in this handicraft that the primary influence of the Celestials is indisputable. At the old Court during the period preceding the advent of Yoritomo it was even the fashion to wear Chinese materials." This statement, although at variance with the Japanese Reports before quoted, which give Korea the credit of having introduced the art of silk weaving into Japan, is probably correct so far as the processes of weaving richly patterned fabrics are concerned. Allowing that the Chinese taught the Japanese weavers their modes of producing silk brocades, it is quite obvious that, as in other arts derived from the Chinese, the pupils quickly surpassed their teachers. On all points of artistic excellence the finest Japanese textiles are superior to anything of a kindred nature produced by Chinese looms. In the matter of plain and heavy silk fabrics, however, the Chinese may fairly defy competition. As examples of the finest class of Japanese fabrics we may direct attention to Plates V., X., XII., and XIII., of this Section, which are faithful representations of works of singular beauty and richness.

Specimens of early weaving are now becoming extremely scarce in Japan; those persons who happen to possess any being very reluctant to part with them. There appear to be several collectors in the country who highly prize such evidences of the early art culture and industrial skill of Japan. M. Gonse states that the most celebrated collection is in the possession of the Prince of Kaga. He says:—"The greater number of the specimens were collected by the first Prince of Kaga, Maéda Toshiyé. The valuables of this powerful family form the richest private collection

existing at the present time. The stuffs were shown some years ago at the inauguration of the statue raised to the memory of Toshiyé."

As nothing but silk was worn by the aristocracy of Japan during the whole of the feudal period and down to the revolution of 1868, it is not to be wondered at that we find in every old fabric evidences of the most careful artistic thought and manipulatory skill. The immense variety of designs these textiles present is truly wonderful. Prior to the end of the sixteenth century the most costly and luxurious robes were worn by the men on all ceremonial occasions: but about that date the dresses of ladies of the court and of the wives and daughters of the nobles became richer in material and colour, those of princes and noblemen assuming a more sombre and retiring character in design and colour. Although the Japanese nobles have always worn silk garments of the most costly kind, thick and stiff as best suited the peculiar style of dress worn at court, they appear to have displayed a refined taste for quiet toned colours whenever it became a matter to be decided by themselves. This refined taste has never died out. The form and colour of all state and ceremonial costumes were prescribed by hard and fast laws, which every one, from the highest downwards, had to observe.

At what date the introduction of gold took place in the weaving of silk brocades appears to be uncertain; but it was probably not used before the fourteenth century; and then very sparingly in comparison with later times. During the fourteenth century the designs adopted for the rich silks were simple in character and generally small in scale; diapers, frets, and repetitions of heraldic devices being those most commonly used. Brocades in two colours were produced in large quantities. Floral designs, such as we are familiar with in the later fabrics, do not appear to have been favourites with the early weavers. Simple, however, as the brocades of the fourteenth century may be in point of design, they show no weakness in point of manufacture. The preparation and weaving of silk were perfectly understood at that period. M. Gonse, in his *L'Art Japonais*, gives a drawing of a robe of the court of the Hôjô, dating about the middle of the fourteenth century. The pattern consists of a simple diapered ground powdered with *kiku* crests: the colours are red and white. He remarks:—"Although this material is simple and severe in taste, it proves the high state of perfection attained at the date of its manufacture."

During the following century the art of silk weaving made steady progress; and the designs of the brocades became somewhat more elaborate and floral in character. But of the works of these early centuries we can speak only in very timid and general words; the few examples of fourteenth and fifteenth century fabrics which have reached the West render anything approaching a comprehensive description of them impossible. All our exertions to obtain reliable information from Japanese sources have ended in the most unsatisfactory manner.

There are numerous specimens of early textiles preserved in the celebrated collection of ancient art at Nara, but these throw no trustworthy light on the history of

weaving in Japan. Their age is reputed to be about twelve hundred years. This statement must, however, be accepted *cum grano salis*. Mr. Dresser, who examined these fabrics at Nara, remarks:—"What interests me most perhaps is the woven fabrics, for these, while of this great antiquity, are in perfect preservation, and are thoroughly mediæval and Italian in the style of their patterns. Had I not known to the contrary, and had I made but a cursory examination, I should have supposed that certain specimens from the Bock collection in South Kensington Museum had been lent for exhibition here, while others were more Arabian in character. One of the Arabian-looking fabrics reminded me strongly of a plate in that magnificent work *L'Art Arabe*, in which a similar fabric is portrayed (see plate entitled *Etoffe de tenture*, XII^e siècle). In the specimen here at Nara the pattern consists of circles regularly distributed, both horizontally and vertically, and separated from one another by a distance equal to about half their diameter. These circles are fringed by a sort of Arabian ornament, of such width that these fringes of the various circles almost meet. In each circle are two conventional lions, face to face, while in the spaces intervening between the circles are other small animals. Red and dull yellow is not an uncommon combination of colour in these Arabian-looking fabrics." The textiles here alluded to are evidently of foreign manufacture; and were probably sent as presents to certain Mikados many centuries ago. That any are twelve centuries old we gravely doubt. But the fact that such examples of foreign art were imported into Japan at an early date may reasonably account for the Persian and Indian influences we continually trace in Japanese ornament. The strong likeness of certain forms in native art to those we have so long looked upon as characteristic of Gothic decoration, is not easily accounted for. It is unlikely that any direct communication existed between Japan and Western Christendom during the twelfth or two following centuries. With reference to the textiles at Nara, Mr. Dresser appears to have no hesitation in accepting the age given to them by the Japanese. He concludes his remarks upon them by saying:—"There is no museum of antiquities in the world, so far as I know, half so instructive to the European as this rare collection at Nara. Where else could we see fabrics printed, embroidered, and felted, and, although more than a thousand years old, almost as fresh as on the day when they first left their makers' hands in India, Persia, Central Asia, China, and Japan?"

In the Reports of the Japanese Commission, already quoted, it is stated that very fine stuffs were produced in Japan as early as the opening of the sixth century; and that at Nara, in the temple of Tō-dai-ji, are still preserved brocades fabricated seven hundred and fifty years ago. From this it would appear that the Japanese firmly believe in the great antiquity of the fabrics at Nara; and we can only remark, if the former statement is correct, relating to the condition of the art of silk weaving about the year 500, that the fabrics at Nara may well be of the twelfth century. We feel, however, some hesitation in accepting it as an established fact.

During the sixteenth century the art continued much in the same state as in the

two preceding centuries; the disturbed state of the country in all probability checked its development. In the matter of design a gradual change, however, took place; a greater richness of colour and a more florid style of decoration were introduced in the silks used for court and ceremonial costumes. Some dresses, reputed to be of this epoch, which have reached Europe, are distinguished by both the above characteristics. Embroidery was resorted to in many cases to supplement and enrich the patterns produced in the loom. Towards the end of this century, as we have before stated, the more gorgeous fabrics were chiefly used for ladies' dresses.

In the seventeenth century we approach a field of more reliable nature; historical information, though scanty to a degree, is fairly trustworthy; and examples of textiles produced during the later part of the period are more numerous and accessible. Japan became settled and peace-loving during this century, and its art industries received a new impulse and increased patronage. M. Gonse remarks:—"It was in the seventeenth century, at the Court of Yedo, that the costumes attained their most exalted splendour and elegance. The art of weaving had arrived at perfection. I am of opinion that the epoch of Yémitsou was the period at which the silk industry had reached its best days." M. Gonse illustrates, in proof of this statement, a robe of fiery red damask decorated with symbolical cranes, and a piece of an *obi* of velvet ("*velours épingle*") figured with flowers and butterflies, the treatment of the latter closely resembling that presented in our Plate V. of this Section. The general design of the fragment in M. Gonse's collection is, however, by no means so bold or good as that of M. Bing's *obi*, illustrated by us.

At this point we may make a few observations on the weaving of these characteristic velvets in Japan. Very few specimens which can lay claim to any age have reached Europe, but the few that have come are remarkable for the vigour of their design and the perfection of their workmanship. We need only point to the velvet represented in Plate V. to support what has been said relative to artistic treatment; while we can assure the reader that, in point of manufacture, it can, as M. Gonse has claimed for his fragment, "compete with the finest Genoese velvet of the commencement of the seventeenth century." The pattern of the fabric on Plate V. has all the character and masculine vigour of a design by KŌRIN; indeed, one can easily imagine such a design having been derived from some superb piece of lacquer by that wonderful master. It is produced by black cut velvet and black and buff uncut velvet upon a ground of tightly woven silk having a slight satin finish.

At what time the art of weaving velvet was commenced in Japan is uncertain, and conflicting opinions exist on the question. We do not think, however, that the possession of dry historical data on this or any other art will add anything to the popular appreciation of Japanese handicraft, or will in any way assist its influence for good on Western ornamental design; hence we have not sought to pad this book with lengthy historical disquisitions, always certain to be, from the extreme difficulty of procuring information from the Japanese, more or less unreliable. Our own expe-

rience during our eighteen years' study of Japanese art is that it is hopeless to find two Japanese who will or can give the same information when questioned, or who will agree on any one point. This may, in all likelihood, be the result of ignorance, not at all to be wondered at, or a simple or suspicious reluctance to tell us what they know relative to their native industries. If well-educated and intelligent Europeans, travelling in Japan, were suddenly questioned as to the time when the weaving of velvet was first practised in the West, it is more than probable, unless they were thoroughly versed in the history of weaving, that they would be unable to give a satisfactory reply, or feel themselves capable of making anything beyond the merest guess. Hence we say that ignorance on the part of an ordinary, well-educated, and highly intelligent Japanese on this or any kindred subject is not to be wondered at for a moment. He may put aside the question by some hasty statement which must not be relied upon. But to return. The weaving of velvet has, in all probability, not been practised in Japan for much above a couple of centuries. If M. Gonse's fragment is an authenticated work of the seventeenth century, it is a sufficient proof that the manufacture of rich figured velvets was thoroughly understood during that epoch: and the fine *obi*, in the Bing Collection, given on Plate V., is reputed to be about two hundred years old.

The active commercial relations of the Dutch with Japan during the latter half of the seventeenth century may have led to the introduction of examples of Flemish, Italian, or French velvets into the country: and the very sight of these in Kiôto would fire the imitative faculties of the weavers of that imperial city, and spur them on to produce similar materials. It is quite possible that the Portuguese may have brought such costly fabrics as presents to the Court during the latter part of the sixteenth century. The Portuguese trade commenced shortly after the year 1542, the year in which the Portuguese merchantman was wrecked, during a voyage from Siam to China, on the western coast of the island of Kiusiu. Or it is quite probable that the first figured velvets ever seen in Japan were those forming the gorgeous vestments of the Jesuit fathers under Francis Xavier. Sir Rutherford Alcock believes the manufacture of velvet to be quite modern. He remarks:—"We are now endeavouring to copy this emancipation" (alluding here to the freedom of Japanese textile design) "from formality, and the soft crape and silk materials, with patterns in satin, so much introduced in Paris and London, are close imitations of Japanese materials. They," (the Japanese) "on the other hand, are learning to make our velvet, *which is not a native manufacture.*" Mr. Dresser, on this subject, says:—"The Japanese seem to understand most of the systems of weaving that we employ, but they also have methods peculiar to themselves. It is common to find terry cloths with parts so cut as to produce a velvet pattern, when the velvet appears as the figure, and the terry as the ground; but when this is the case it generally happens that by looking into the cut surface of the velvet gold may be seen, for the Japanese often weave gold into the substance of a fabric so that it can only be seen through the cut pile surface." Some remarkable

pieces of figured velvet were shown by the Japanese in the Paris Exhibition of 1867. These had woven grounds entirely of dull gold, with bold patterns, in the style of KŌRIN, thrown up in black, white, and subdued tints, cut and terry velvets being alone used for the designs. Kiōto appears to have always been, as it is now, the seat of the velvet weaving industry in Japan.

Another branch of manufacture apparently took root in Japan about the end of the sixteenth or the beginning of the seventeenth century, in all probability through Portuguese agency; we allude to tapestry weaving. The silk tapestry of Japan is characterised by extreme accuracy and delicacy of manufacture, produced, like the Gobelins tapestry, entirely by a tedious hand process. On Plate VI. of this Section is given a truthful representation of a characteristic piece; and we may refer the reader to the Description attending the Plate for particulars regarding its fabrication.

M. Gonse, who has given considerable attention, under specially favourable circumstances, to the textile art of Japan, thus speaks on the subject of its tapestry:—
"Ainsi que me le faisait remarquer M. Alfred Darcel, il ne s'agit pas d'un tissu présentant plus ou moins d'analogie avec nos tapisseries européennes, mais bien d'un véritable point des Gobelins, d'une exécution très soignée. Les procédés en ont-ils été importés par les Portugais ou par les Hollandais? Je n'ai pu avoir de renseignements précis à cet égard. Les Japonais m'ont affirmé que l'origine de ces tapisseries était chinoise. Tout ce que je sais, c'est qu'on en fabriquait déjà à Kioto à la fin du XVI^e siècle. Taiko Sama fit exécuter pour Maéda Toshiyé un grand panneau de tapisseries que le prince de Kaga possède encore aujourd'hui. M. le comte de Monbel m'a affirmé avoir vu au Japon, soit dans les temples, soit entre les mains de quelques particuliers, des tapisseries européennes du XVII^e siècle. La production des ateliers de Kioto a, du reste, été fort restreinte; les spécimens de cette industrie sont des plus rares et à peine connus en Europe."

M. Gonse illustrates in his book, though in a weak and rather unsatisfactory manner, five specimens of tapestry from his own collection. One of these presents a trunk and branches of *ume* in subdued colours on a mixed buff and gold ground, reputed to be of the end of the sixteenth, or, at latest, of the commencement of the seventeenth century. The remaining four pieces present floral designs in harmonious low-toned colours and gold upon light blue grounds; these are fixed by their owner to be of the eighteenth century. We have not seen the originals and can form no opinion as regards their manufacture from the small and carelessly executed chromo prints which are before us.

We have been unable to find in Japanese books any illustration showing the tapestry weaver at work, although drawings of the ordinary loom weaving are numerous. The fact that tapestry working was always a select and never a popular industry in Japan may account for this. The absence of any illustration is to be regretted, for the slightest sketch would inform us whether the tapestry is wrought in a horizontal or upright frame. A careful examination of several examples of the

finest description of Japanese tapestry inclines us to believe that the vertical frame (the *haute-lisse* of the French weavers) was employed in their fabrication.

Tapestry cannot be considered true weaving nor is it genuine embroidery, yet the mode of its production may be said to combine in a manner both weaving and embroidery. It is wrought in a loom or frame on which are stretched the warp threads. The designs and ground are not thrown across these from side to side by means of a shuttle or any similar appliance, but are laboriously produced by countless short threads of silk or gold put in by a sort of needle. The result is a compact and durable web in which the woof alone appears on both sides; the back being the same as the front excepting that it presents a rough appearance in places where the ends of the woof threads fall out.

It will be observed on reference to Plate VI. that a certain mosaic treatment obtains, with no attempt at graduation or mingling of colours. This is the characteristic of all the Japanese tapestry we have met with; and appears, to our minds, to favour the hypothesis of a Chinese rather than an European origin for the manufacture in Japan. Of course this flat-coloured and hard-edged style of tapestry is simple and tentative; and bears no comparison with the elaborate system of textile painting practised at the Gobelins and other old and celebrated European establishments: but it is quite possible that the Japanese, seeing that work requiring many graduated colours could be more readily done by embroidery, never sought to imitate European work or to develop the art of tapestry working beyond its simplest limits. So far, however, as they elected to go they accomplished wonders: their tapestries are absolutely perfect as regards manipulative skill.

The latter half of the seventeenth and the opening years of the eighteenth century formed unquestionably the greatest epoch of Japanese textile industry. The beautiful fabrics illustrated on Plates V., X., XII., and XIII., are characteristic specimens of the silk weaving of this period, and prove the efficiency of the mechanical appliances employed in their fabrication, as well as the dexterity and taste of their weavers. The fabrics shown on Plate X. are remarkable essays, presenting much of the beauty and refinement of hand embroidery in their floral decoration, and consummate skill in the production of their graduated grounds by simple warp and woof threads.

During the eighteenth century the weaving of gorgeous brocades continued to increase; but their production in vast numbers led to a deterioration in quality and a falling off in excellence of design and colouring. By some this century is believed to have seen the culmination of all the arts of Japan; but we gravely doubt, however rich it may claim to be on the score of prolific production, that it surpassed the previous century in artistic feeling and culture. We have carefully selected the brocades represented on Plates IV., VII., and XI., to show the taste and skill of the weavers of the first half of the century; and in them we may trace the lingering refinement of the close of the seventeenth century struggling through new convictions. The brocades on Plates III., VIII., and IX., show the true style of the eighteenth

century towards its close. This century was extremely rich in embroideries; and the production by the needle of so much in the direction of floral design no doubt engendered a taste for conventional and geometrical forms in loom-wrought patterns. Free treatments of flowers, such as may be seen on Plates X., XII., and XIII., appear to have been almost totally abandoned in favour of such conventional and stiff renderings as those presented by Plates VIII., IX., and XI.

Of the works of the first half of the present century it is unnecessary to speak in any particular way; they simply continued to be designed and carried out in the same spirit as those of the end of the preceding century. Plates I. and II. are from brocades of this period. We are now confining our remarks to those fabrics which received their patterns, by coloured silks and gold, in the loom; leaving the remarks we have to make on fabrics decorated by hand until the closing lines of this essay.

Having concluded our brief semi-historical review, we may now say a few words on the method of weaving the silk and gold brocades alluded to. With the rearing of the silkworms, the unwinding of the cocoons, and the preparation and dyeing of the silk threads before they reach the loom we have nothing to do here*; our brief description begins with the arrangement of the warp threads in the loom.

All the appliances connected with the old Japanese loom are of the most primitive kind, as few mechanical contrivances and as much simple manipulation being resorted to as possible. For instance, a more primitive arrangement for "warping" could not well be imagined than that shown in the cut on the following page, from the great HOKUSAI'S *E-hon tei-kin ô-rai*. The threads for the warp are tied at one end to a piece of bamboo stuck in the centre of an old millstone; while the other ends are passed through the reed of the loom and wound in proper order on the yarn beam, which is, in this case, a board reduced in width where the threads are wound, and

* For the reader interested in this matter we quote the remarks which appear, on the preparation of the silk threads, in the Reports of the Japanese Commission at the Paris Exhibition of 1878.

"PRÉPARATION DES FILS. Cette préparation n'a rapport qu'au traitement des fils avant le montage du métier. Dans le cas où le brin destiné à composer la chaîne doit être simple, on le teint d'abord, puis on le dévide. Si le brin doit être tordu, on le dévide d'abord, on le teint, puis on le redévide. Si les brins doivent être doubles, on les teint d'abord, on les dévide et on les double. Si les brins doivent être cuits, on les dévide à l'état de soie grège, on les tord, on les cuit, on les teint et on les redévide. Pour les trames, les fils employés en brins simples sont traités de la même manière que les fils de chaîne, puis passés à la canette, et mis dans la navette. Si le brin doit être tordu, on le dévide, on le tord, on le teint, puis on le redévide pour monter ensuite la navette. Si les brins doivent être doublés, ils sont d'abord dévidés, doublés, teints, puis redévidés. Pour les fils qui doivent être cuits, on les dévide à l'état de soie grège, on les tord, on les cuit, on les teint et on les dévide. Pour les fils qui doivent être cuits et doublés, on les dévide d'abord à l'état de soie grège, on les double, on les cuit, puis on les redévide pour monter la navette.

"Les fils, tant pour la chaîne que pour la trame, doivent être imprégnés de colle de riz ou de colle d'algues marines, quand le genre d'étoffe que l'on veut fabriquer l'exige.

"Le dévidage consiste à enrouler sur de petites bobines la soie en écheveaux, mouillée, puis séchée au préalable.

"La torsion consiste à tordre au moyen d'un dévidoir la soie grège dévidée. Cette torsion simple se nomme *Katayori*; la torsion de gauche à droite de la soie à plusieurs brins s'appelle *Awosôyori*. La torsion en sens inverse se nomme *Moroyori*. La soie à plusieurs brins, tordue très-fortement avec des dévidoirs de dimensions variées, porte le nom de *Honyori*. Le fil qui a déjà subi le traitement ci-dessus (*Honyori*) et qui a été tordu de gauche à droite est joint à un nouveau fil que l'on tord de droite à gauche; ce procédé porte le nom de *Habeyori*. Le doublage consiste à dévider en doublant plusieurs brins sur une autre bobine.

"L'opération dite *Niyasu* consiste à mettre environ cent *nomme* ($\frac{5}{16}$ lb. avoirdupois) "de soie grège dans un sac en cuir souple et à le frapper pendant environ une heure avec des maillets en bois."

notched at each end to fit into the loom. In another and older series of drawings, illustrating the entire silk industry from the hatching of the silkworm eggs to the operations of the loom, we observe that the warp threads are first wound to the required length from large reels on to smaller ones, and thence collected in the process of warping. This operation is partly shown in the large cut on the adjoining page, which forms the last of the series.

The construction of the silk loom in the same cut is not altogether easy to make out. It appears to be an old form of the simple loom employed in the weaving of the plain fabrics so largely used in all epochs by the Japanese for articles of dress.



FROM HOKUSAI'S *E-HON TEIKIN OSHIJI*.

The loom employed for the weaving of the richly figured brocades, such as are illustrated in our Plates, is of the simplest form compatible with the work it has to perform. It does not differ materially in its construction from the loom already described in connexion with the weaving of cotton, except that the large healds are omitted and an arrangement of independent vertical strings takes their place, exactly as in our Jacquard looms. These strings are looped to receive the warp threads, and are the same in number as those threads. A single warp thread passes through each of the loops so that it can be drawn up at pleasure; or any number can be drawn up in combination as the design of the brocade dictates.

Previous to the invention by Jacquard of the ingenious apparatus which bears his name, looms similar in principle to those used by the Japanese were universal in Europe for figure-weaving. The following description of our old drawloom will serve to fully explain the *modus operandi* of the Japanese brocade looms.



FROM A SERIES OF OLD DRAWINGS REPRESENTING THE PROCESSES OF SILK MANUFACTURE.

"Figure-weaving requires considerable preparation in mounting the loom, and differs from plain-weaving in the number and arrangement of the healds, and the method of moving them. As the number of healds is generally too great to be moved

by the feet of the weaver, an apparatus called the *drawloom* was in general use until the introduction of the Jacquard machine, and still continues in use in certain localities (1854). In the drawloom, the warp threads are passed through loops formed in strings, arranged in a vertical plane, one string to every warp thread; and these strings were so arranged in separate groups, that when an attendant, called the *drawboy*, pulled the handle which united one group, he drew up all those warp threads which, in the order of the pattern, required to be raised for the passage of the shuttle. The order in which the threads are grouped is determined by a pattern paper or design; it is divided by lines into small squares, so as to represent a woven fabric, and upon



FROM HOKUSAI'S *EHON TEIKIN O-RAI*.

it the pattern is drawn and coloured. It thus guides the weaver in building the '*monture*,' or arranging and grouping the various threads; and the order in which the handles are to be pulled or drawn is also arranged so that the weaver and his drawboy may work with ease and certainty. The building of the *monture* was often a work of some months, and then only served for one pattern." *

In all the looms for figure-weaving in Japan the "drawboy" is an important and indispensable adjunct, for no attempt seems to have been made to substitute a mechanical appliance for his monotonous labours. He remains, perched up aloft, pulling,

* *Cyclopædia of Useful Arts*, edited by Charles Tomlinson. London 1854.

with wearisome regularity, group after group of healds until the pattern appears complete, and then commences the routine afresh, and so on from morning until night.* A drawing of what is evidently intended for a brocade loom is given in HOKUSAI'S *E-hon tei-kin ô-rai*. This we give a reproduction of in the cut on the opposite page. Unfortunately the upper part, which is controlled by the "drawboy," is omitted.

The process of weaving elaborate patterned silks is of necessity slow; care must be taken that no mistake is made by the "drawboy," and that the proper shuttle is used each time. There are as many shuttles as there are colours in the woof, and they are not quickly thrown from side to side by mechanical means, as they are in our looms, but deliberately passed from hand to hand between the threads of the warp.

The gold used in the weaving of brocades is almost invariably in the form of very narrow strips of paper, gilded on one side. The paper used is extremely tough, called *torino ko*; sheets of this are stretched and coated with size prepared from a certain kind of seaweed. When dry they are smoothed by being rubbed with the fibrous portion of a gourd which has been decayed in water; then again coated with size and covered with gold leaf. The leaves of gold are gently pressed with wadding to lay them evenly, allowed to become thoroughly dry, and finally rubbed over with cotton wool dipped in colza oil. At this stage the sheets are ready for the shredding process. They are accurately cut into strips, averaging about 75 to the inch; and in this condition are woven in the fabric. The strips are generally supported on the underside of the fabric, where not required for the pattern, by a very fine secondary system of warp threads. In some brocades we have met with the gold strips left loose or cut away at the back. The secondary system of fine warp threads appears to be generally adopted to support the thick silk woof threads in the best class of richly figured fabrics. Indeed, it is absolutely necessary to the production of a firm and durable material. Much ingenuity is shown by the Japanese weavers in building the "monture" for their elaborately figured silk and gold brocades, grouping and arranging the healds of both the systems of warp threads so as to throw the rich silk warp well on the face of the fabric, and binding the silk woof and gold strips, laid woofwise, into a homogeneous texture. Without a very elaborate series of diagrams, of a technical nature, it would be impossible for us to explain the Japanese methods of weaving these brocades; and it is questionable if such purely mechanical matters are within the limits of the scheme of our Work.

* The following extract from the Reports of the Japanese Commission proves our statement to be correct. "Il y a deux sortes de métiers connus sous les noms de *Takabata* et *Hirabata*. La construction de ces métiers étant très-compiquée, nous n'essaierons pas ici de les décrire, car, alors même que nous le ferions, le public ne pourrait s'en rendre un compte exact sans voir l'appareil.

"Pour tisser, on commence par faire passer dans le peigne les fils de chaîne préparés, puis on le met en place, le temple se composant d'un certain nombre de ficelles, nombre proportionné à celui des fils de chaîne et de trame; ce temple est disposé selon les dessins tracés sur la carte quadrillée et il est tenu par un homme assis sur le haut du métier, qui fait descendre et monter les fils de chaîne, ce qui fait bientôt apercevoir le dessin. Dans le cas du métier dit *Takabata*, on emploie une grande navette chargée de fils de trame; s'il s'agit, au contraire, du *Hirabata*, on emploie une petite navette dite *Katsumi* (thon, par suite de sa ressemblance avec ce poisson.

In conclusion, we have a few words to say on the methods of ornamenting plain silk fabrics by dyeing, printing, and painting. The fabrics upon which the greatest amount of ingenuity is expended by the Japanese artists are fine varieties of silk crape, woven in narrow pieces, not exceeding, as a rule, sixteen inches in width. The richer and heavier material called *chirimen*, is produced of much greater width.

As the ornamentation of these crapes is almost entirely the work of the hand, it naturally presents an interesting field of study to the decorative artist. We have before us as we write three pieces of silk crape ornamented with striking designs. These may be briefly described as follows. The first in importance has a ground of a refined slate-blue, upon which are disposed numerous oblong panels or medallions, grounded with fawn and marked with graining lines, as if intended to represent wooden panels or screens. These are erratically disposed in overlapping groups, and are most elaborately enriched with square and irregularly-shaped compartments or patches of richly coloured designs. Some of these designs, representing flowers and leaves floating on water or lying upon ice, are marvels of delicate manipulation. Between the groups of panels the blue ground is relieved by masses of dark brown lines of no definite pattern and white branches bearing pink and scarlet *ume* flowers and buds.

The second piece of crape is ornamented with most artistically drawn birds, flying singly, or congregated together in groups of three, five, seven, and occasionally greater numbers. The ground is a medium-toned slate-blue, and the birds are in several shades of brown, drab, white, and black. The third piece is somewhat similar in treatment. The ground is of the favourite slate-blue relieved with small dashes of bamboo in darker slate-colour. The birds are wild geese, represented in full flight, and rendered in shades of grey and black.

Even on the most careful examination of such fabrics it is extremely difficult to discover the exact methods followed by the artists in their ornamentation. That they combine dyeing, painting or brush staining, and printing there is no doubt; but to what extent "resists" and "discharges" have been resorted to in all cases is uncertain.

The first operation of the artist, on being handed the piece of white crape, is to carefully draw, throughout its entire length, the general outlines of the design, so much at least as is requisite to direct the application of the "resist." The spaces are now filled in with the paste-like compound; and all the delicate lines, which are to be left white, have the "resist" applied in thin threads well pressed into the fabric. When the "resist" has become perfectly dry, the crape is immersed in the dye vat: and on removal is steamed and washed in the usual way. The fabric is now returned to the artist, who, with brushes dipped in the various stains, paints in such details as are required, and adds any ornamentation his taste directs to the ground. The fabric is now finally steamed, washed, and dried. Such is evidently the method followed in the production of the bird patterns above mentioned.

A still more complicated and roundabout way is followed by the Japanese silk painters, for so they may be called, who produce the marvellous ornamentation

frequently to be seen on native dress fabrics, in carrying out their quaint and pretty conceits. Mr. Dresser has so clearly described the mode of procedure we allude to, that we venture to quote his words in preference to giving a description from our own pen. He says:—

“Now as to the means of figuring fabrics, the silk is first given to an artist, who draws the pattern upon it as carefully as if he were designing an historical cartoon. The pieces of silk figured by the process which I am now describing, are about forty feet in length by twelve inches in width, and on the entire fabric the artist places either a varying or a repeating pattern as is required. This pattern he draws with a preparation of indigo, which can readily be removed from the fabric by washing; and he not only gives outline but adds depth, shade, or whatever may enable him to produce a desired effect. Thus, at the outset, the whole pattern is drawn by hand, and this we should think a sufficiently costly mode of giving figure to a fabric; but in the process which we are considering the work is only now in its first stage of production.

“The artist having finished his work hands the fabric to a workman who has prepared a material of a most tenacious and ductile nature—a sort of glutinous bird-lime. This mucous matter he forms by boiling the finest possible rice-flour with lime water of a particular strength. Having previously prepared this glutinous matter he warms it slightly, and rubs it on a board with a kind of putty knife, but it appears to me as difficult to rub as warm india-rubber would be. A piece of this bird-lime about the size of a small pea is placed on the end of a wooden point or skewer, and a portion of the fabric is stretched flat by bowed pieces of cane being placed beneath it. Thus all is ready for work. Holding the stretched fabric over a small charcoal fire, with the left hand under the cloth, so as to raise any portion of it that may be necessary, and with the point of wood, on which is the little ball of plastic matter, in the other hand, the operator begins by touching the fabric at some point of the pattern, say at the base of a leaf, with the mucous ball, which at once adheres to the cloth. The ball of mucus is now drawn to some little distance from the surface of the fabric, say a foot, but between the fabric and the ball there now intervenes a thread of this mucus, for so ductile is the material, and so sticky, that it will adhere to anything, and draw out to a thread some yards in length without breaking. By certain dexterous movements of the right hand, in which the wooden point supporting the plastic matter is held, and by the middle finger of the left hand raising the cloth when necessary, a thread of the plastic matter is being constantly formed, and is as constantly dropped upon the fabric as an outline to the pattern. With the utmost skill leaves, flowers, and even the small parts of the flowers, as the stamens, are outlined with this mucus, which falls upon the cloth as a thread of about the thickness of an ordinary pin-shank. The whole pattern, however small its detail, or however finely serrated its leaves, is thus outlined. But as this outline is not sufficient, means are adopted for thickening it. Hence a conical tube of oiled paper is formed of about

four inches in length, and with an orifice at its broad end of about an inch in diameter. At the small end this tube terminates in a tin nozzle, in the apex of which is an opening such as would be made by a fine darning-needle. This tube is charged with the mucus, and through the fine opening in the tin nozzle the plastic matter is so pressed as to thicken (on the outside) and also to raise the outline already formed. All this has afforded a means of preventing the 'running' of dyes which are now to be used; and when thus prepared the fabric is ready for the next stage of the process.

"This consists in the painting with dyes of various colours of the spaces enclosed by the little banks of now-dry but formerly mucous material; and a care is bestowed upon this painting such as would suffice for the production of a highly-finished water-colour drawing. In this way the pattern is wrought. The dyes having dried, the colours are exposed for about six minutes to the action of steam in a steam bath (which is a sort of kitchen 'steamer' placed over a pot of boiling water), and then the mucous matter is removed by the fabric being gently rinsed in a vat of clean water. If the ground is to be coloured the whole of the figures are now painted over by a 'resist,' and the fabric is then dipped in the dye vat, the ground receiving its colour as it is unprotected. . . . The means of producing an effect just described appear to us the most laborious that could well be imagined; yet, while the method is laborious, the results achieved are in the highest degree satisfactory, and nothing could be more welcome than some of the effects thus laboriously obtained."

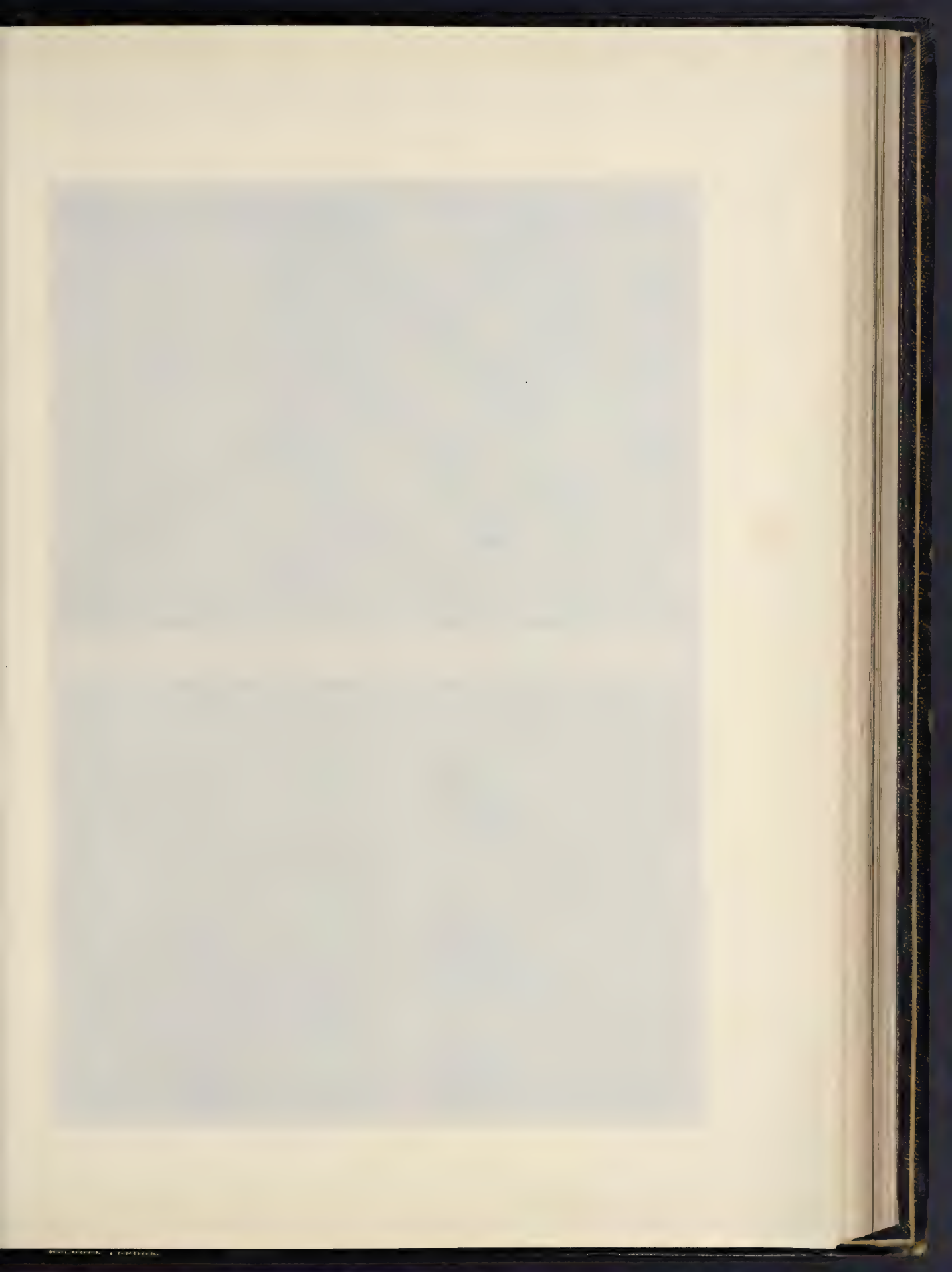
The piece of crape which we have mentioned as being ornamented with the richly ornamented overlapping panels and other devices, has evidently been in part, if not entirely, wrought by the above laborious process. It is not often that fabrics are wholly decorated by this method; it is much too tedious to be used except for the choicest goods. Other processes are commonly associated with it, stencilling and positive block printing taking the place of hand painting in the generality of cases.

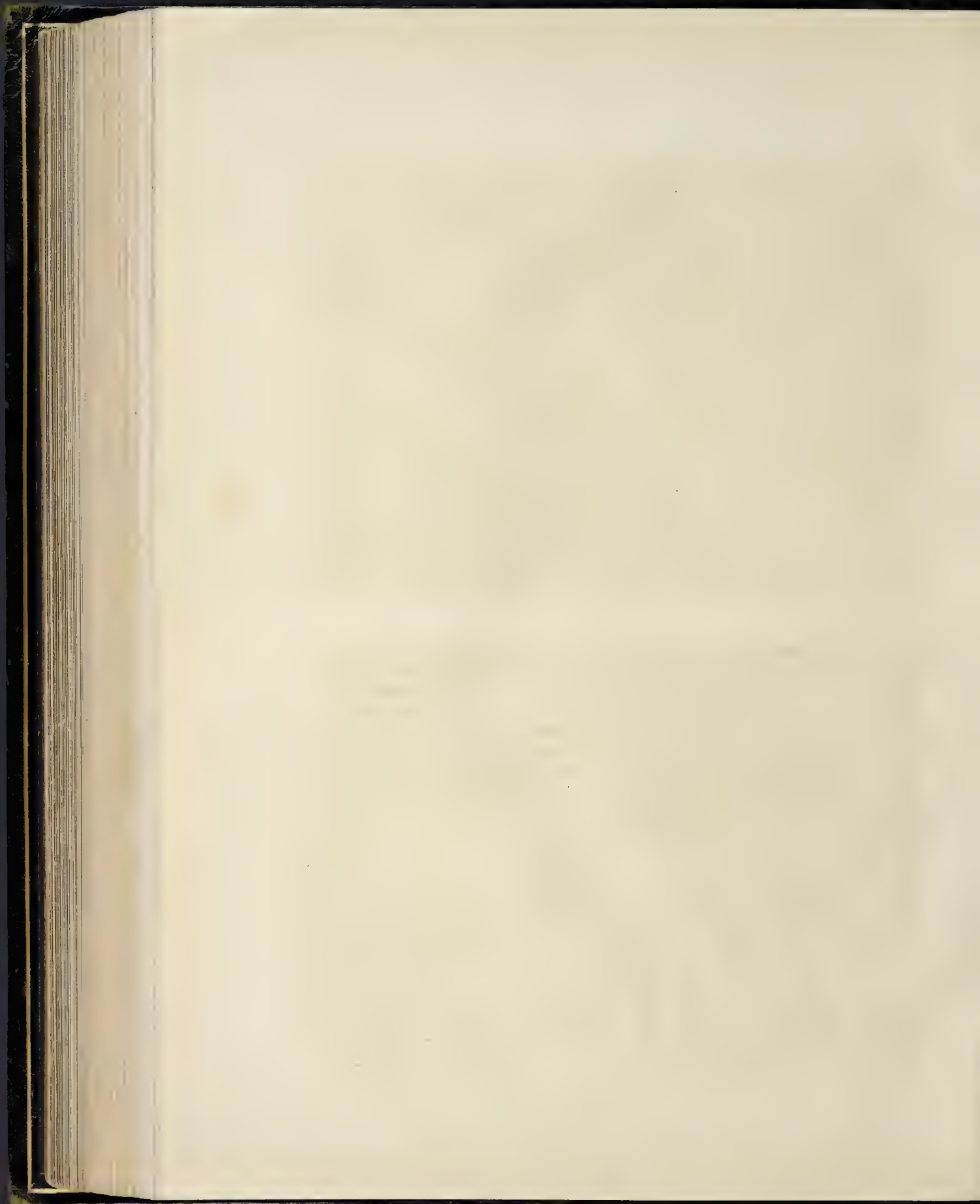
As an example of the great skill of the silk painter, we may refer to the piece of painted *chirimen*, illustrated on Plate IX. of Section First. This painting is executed with stains or dyes and not with pigments or water colours. The general ground, of a light grey colour, has evidently been produced by dyeing; those parts of the fabric which were to be subsequently painted being covered with a "resist." The darker tones and the lines indicating the movements of the water have been added by the brush after the dyeing process was completed. The whole of the duck has been carefully painted by the hand, and the colours fixed by steaming in the usual way. The same is the case with the water-plants, so cunningly introduced in front of the duck with the view of conveying the idea of a wide expanse of water. This is a treatment highly characteristic of Japanese decorative art. To give brilliancy and a natural appearance to the head, neck, and the green feathers of the wing and tail of the duck, the artist has had recourse to another art, that of the embroiderer. Short horizontal stitches of bright green silk, skilfully disposed, here produce an exact

resemblance to the natural plumage of the bird. The effect in the original painting is little short of marvellous. It is not proper, perhaps, to speak of such a work as belonging to ornamental textile fabrics; but it must be borne in mind that it is, after all, produced by the same processes as those employed by the Japanese in the ornamentation of their finest dress pieces.

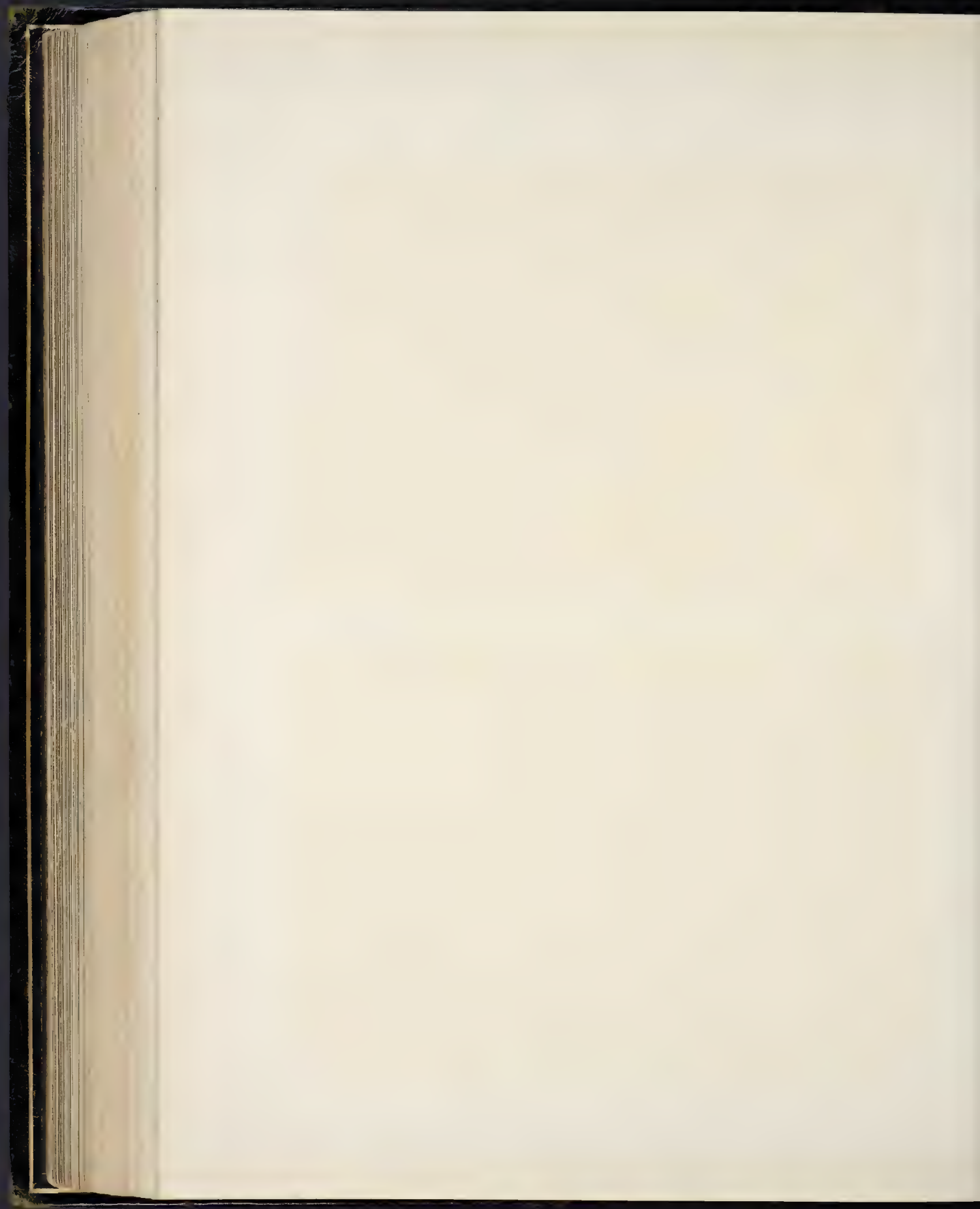
The Japanese produce wonderful designs on their silks by means of positive block printing, charging the blocks with colours in such a way as to give results closely resembling brush work. It is possible that some parts of the painting just alluded to may have been executed by blocks; but the most critical and careful examination has failed to discover evidences of their use. The exquisite softness on the breast and the large feathers of the wing could only have been secured by most delicate manipulation with the brush.

In the decoration of many of the most characteristic silk fabrics produced by the painstaking Japanese, we constantly observe that dyeing, painting, and embroidery are present in a happy league; and in the preparation of the fabrics for the dye vat both stencilling and negative block printing have been resorted to. In certain small and often recurring details we may also detect the use of positive block printing. With the employment of so many processes, all under the control of rare artistic feeling, we can hardly wonder at the beautiful results attained—results met with in the textile art of no other nation on the face of the globe. An examination of many hundreds of dresses and dress fabrics has resulted in a conviction that every possible combination of plain and figure weaving, dyeing, with and without "resists" or "discharges," negative and positive block printing, stencilling, painting, and embroidery has been tried and exhausted by the Japanese art workmen. Without any exaggeration, it would require an entire book, the size of this, to properly describe and illustrate the ornamental textile industry of Japan: in the very limited space at our disposal it has only been possible to allude to the leading methods of producing ornamental fabrics in the loom and by the subsequent processes of dyeing, printing, painting, &c. We are fully aware of the very imperfect nature of the essay we are now concluding, and can only ask the reader's indulgence in regard to its sins of omission.









SECTION THIRD.—PLATE I.

TEXTILE FABRICS.



ICH fabrics, woven chiefly of silk, such as those which are represented in the present Plate, have from time immemorial been much appreciated by the higher orders of Japan, and used for articles of dress, especially for the *obi*, or girdle, worn by the ladies. The fabrics here illustrated show two styles of artistic treatment; the ground of one being uniformly purple-black, produced by the silk warp; while the ground of the other is in bands of different colours, produced, with the exception of those in black, by the silk threads of the woof. The black portions throughout the design are derived from the warp. The surface of the coloured patterns present minute diapers, formed by the regular manner in which the threads are caught by slender filaments of the warp; but very little durability is obtained by the adoption of this method of weaving, and the silk woof soon becomes frayed and detached from the groundwork.

Fans are very favourite decorative devices amongst Japanese artists; and it will be observed that they are freely introduced in both the designs in this Plate. In one case they form the pattern almost entirely; whilst in the other, they are associated with overlapping square and round medallions, filled with floral and conventional devices. The latter pattern is represented one-third the real size; and the former about one-fourth.

In the possession of SIR RUTHERFORD ALCOCK, K C. B.

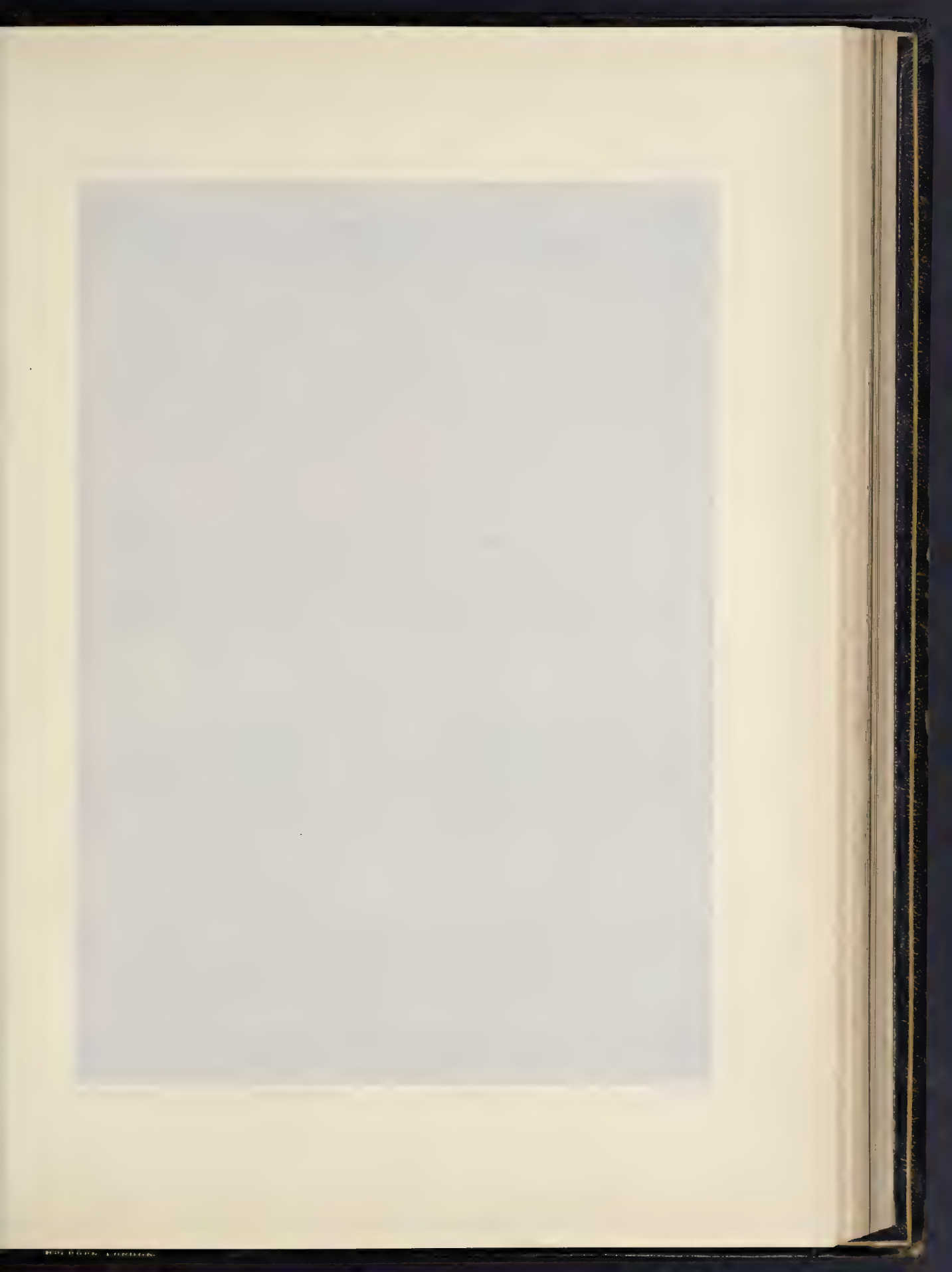




Fig. 1. Turkey. 40.

Fig. 2. Turkey. 41.

Fig. 3. Turkey. 42.

Fig. 4. Turkey. 43.

SECTION THIRD.—PLATE II.

TEXTILE FABRICS.

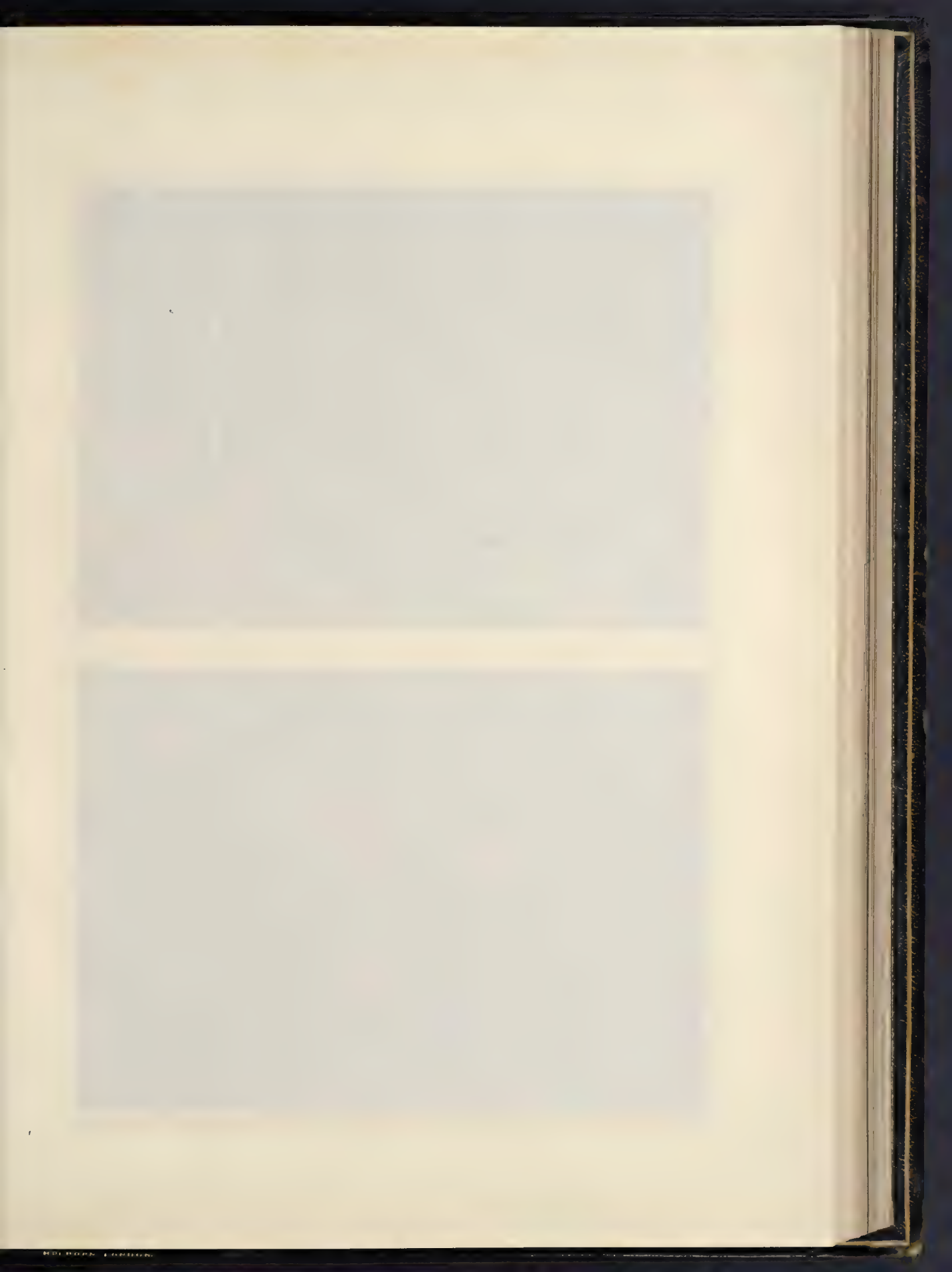


ILK and gold tissues of great beauty of design and colouring have been produced in the Japanese looms; and the one illustrated in this Plate is an admirable specimen of them. Like all the fabrics of a similar class, it is woven of silk and very narrow strips of gilded paper; a mode of manufacture which produces most brilliant and remarkably durable results. The paper is extremely tough and richly gilded on the exposed side; it is of course introduced along with the woof. It will be observed, on reference to the Plate, that great character and relief are given to the general colouring by the use of bands of different tints woofwise, a mode of treatment very commonly resorted to by Japanese weavers, as we have before mentioned.

The design, though based on very simple geometrical forms, is wonderfully rich in that element which the Japanese artists so highly prize—variety: and here we find it displayed, both in device and colour, with the most satisfactory results.

Rich tissues of this class do not appear to have been employed for articles of dress, save, probably, for theatrical costumes; but they were frequently made up as *fukusa*, or the squares used by the Japanese for covering ceremonial presents; and employed for the bindings of *ori-hon*, or folding books. An illustration of a tissue from a book cover is given in the following Plâte.

In the possession of MONSIEUR S. BING, of Paris.





SECTION THIRD.—PLATE III.

TEXTILE FABRICS.



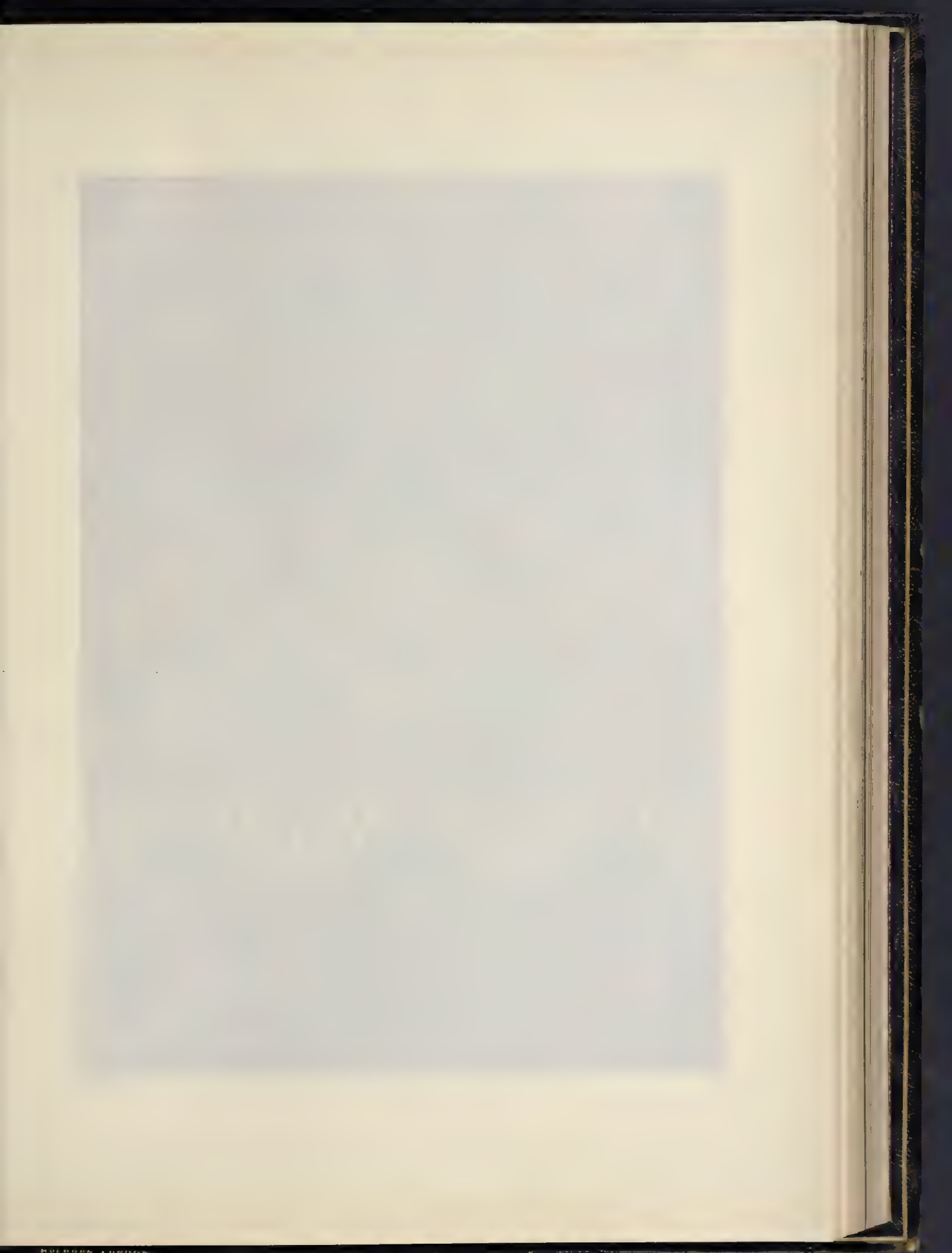
OVERS or bindings of *ori-hon*, or folding books, frequently present interesting specimens of Japanese silk and gold tissues; and they have been the means of preserving many examples of skilful loom work which if applied to other uses would not have come under our observation.

The tissue represented on the left hand of the present Plate covers an *ori-hon* containing a choice series of drawings of birds and flowers. It is of characteristic geometrical design, beautifully woven in silk and gold in the usual manner, and full of minute and carefully thrown up detail.

In the possession of HENRY DOULTON, ESQ., of London.

The tissue represented on the right hand is also of silk and gold, and presents a treatment much affected by the Japanese designers of textile fabrics. The pattern consists of bold flowers (*butan*) and leaves, arranged in horizontal rows, and produced in different colours by the woof threads; alternating with rows of dragons and religious emblems, disposed in circular medallions, and also thrown up in different colours. All the details of the pattern are outlined with gold, producing an extremely rich effect.

In the possession of SIR RUTHERFORD ALCOCK, K.C.B.





SECTION THIRD.—PLATE IV.

TEXTILE FABRICS.



THE silk and gold tissue which forms the subject of this Plate is a remarkably fine specimen of the loom work of the early part of the last century. It is woven with great care and uniformity, with gold strips of unusual narrowness, counting about fifty-two to the inch. The green ground is produced by the warp, and the pattern is thrown up in the silk woof threads and the narrow strips of gilded paper passed woof-wise.

We observe in this tissue, as in the brocades illustrated in Plate I., great use is made of the open fan as an ornamental feature; but here it is treated and coloured in a much more refined manner. The design measures, in the width, $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches from centre to centre of the fans.

This beautiful specimen of tissue came to Europe in the form of a *fukusa*.

In the possession of MONSIEUR S. BING, of Paris.





SECTION THIRD—PLATE V.

TEXTILE FABRICS.



VERY rich fabrics, woven of silk, and in which the more accentuated portions of the patterns are boldly thrown up in cut and uncut velvets, are unquestionably the choicest productions of the Japanese looms. In fabrics of this description, the native love for refined and low-toned colours is almost invariably displayed; and the velvets are for the most part black, the cut and uncut portions presenting two degrees of intensity, as may be noticed on the upper and under wings of the butterflies in the present Plate; and in the leading wavy lines of the pattern, and the stalks of the leaves. In the fabric represented, which is that of an *obi*, or scarf worn round the waist by the ladies of Japan, black cut velvet, and black and light buff uncut velvet are introduced, the latter forming the leaves, flowers, and the light portions of the wings of the butterflies. The tawny ground throughout is in rich and tightly woven silk.

The designs met with in the fabrics of this class are as a rule of a bold type, similar to that in the Plate. Minute or elaborate detail is avoided, for the nature of the material is not well suited for intricate lines and forms. Bamboos, with stems and leaves in black cut and uncut velvet, laden with snow, represented in white velvet, are favourite devices; and the grounds are sometimes in silk and gold, woven so as to produce a granulated effect. The grounds are further dotted with small patches of white velvet representing snow-flakes.

The design in the Plate is reproduced about one-third the size of the original fabric.

In the possession of MONSIEUR S. BING, of Paris.





SECTION THIRD.—PLATE VI.

TEXTILE FABRICS.



THE fabric which is accurately represented in the Plate under review is a true piece of hand-made Tapestry, worked with tightly twisted silk and gold over warp threads which run in a diagonal direction on the piece, as clearly indicated in our representation. The silk threads are tightly drawn, and with so much regularity that the result has the appearance of loom-work; but the fact that it is true tapestry is proved by the manner in which the colours abut on each other without mingling, and by the reverse side, which is exactly the same as the front, only somewhat ragged with the cut and tied ends of the different silks. The gold introduced is in the form of thread, made, apparently, by twisting very narrow strips of bright gilded paper round silk. The effect it produces is extremely rich, as the light strikes upon the twisted gold at countless angles.

The silk and gold threads forming the woof are "coursed" with the utmost regularity, the measure or count being about forty-six double "shoots" to the inch. When held up to the light all the colours show themselves, in the direction of the warp, to be disconnected, with a thin opening between their edges. This is a characteristic feature of the mode of manufacture resorted to.

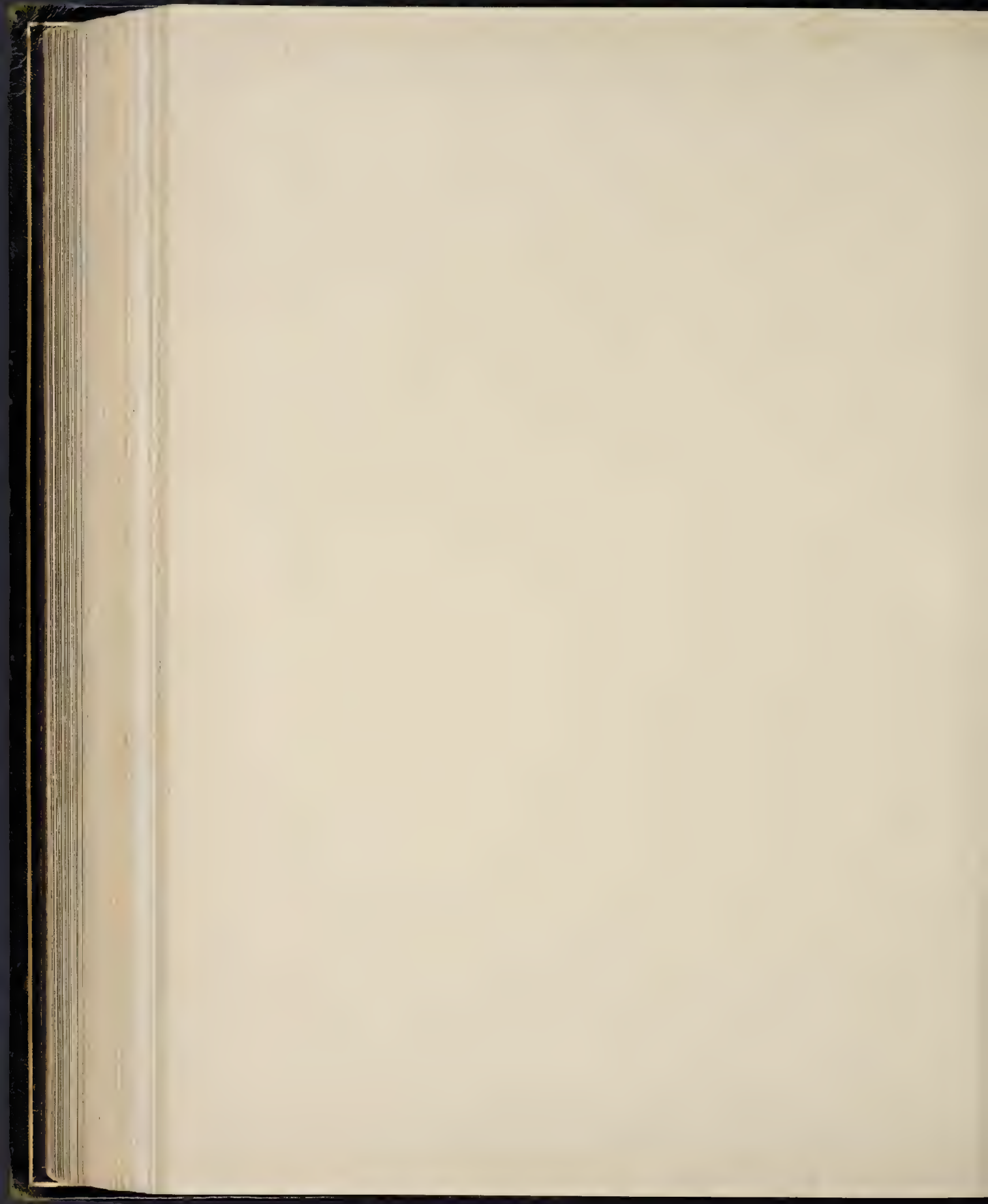
Specimens of Japanese tapestry are comparatively rare; we have only met with three or four in the course of our researches.

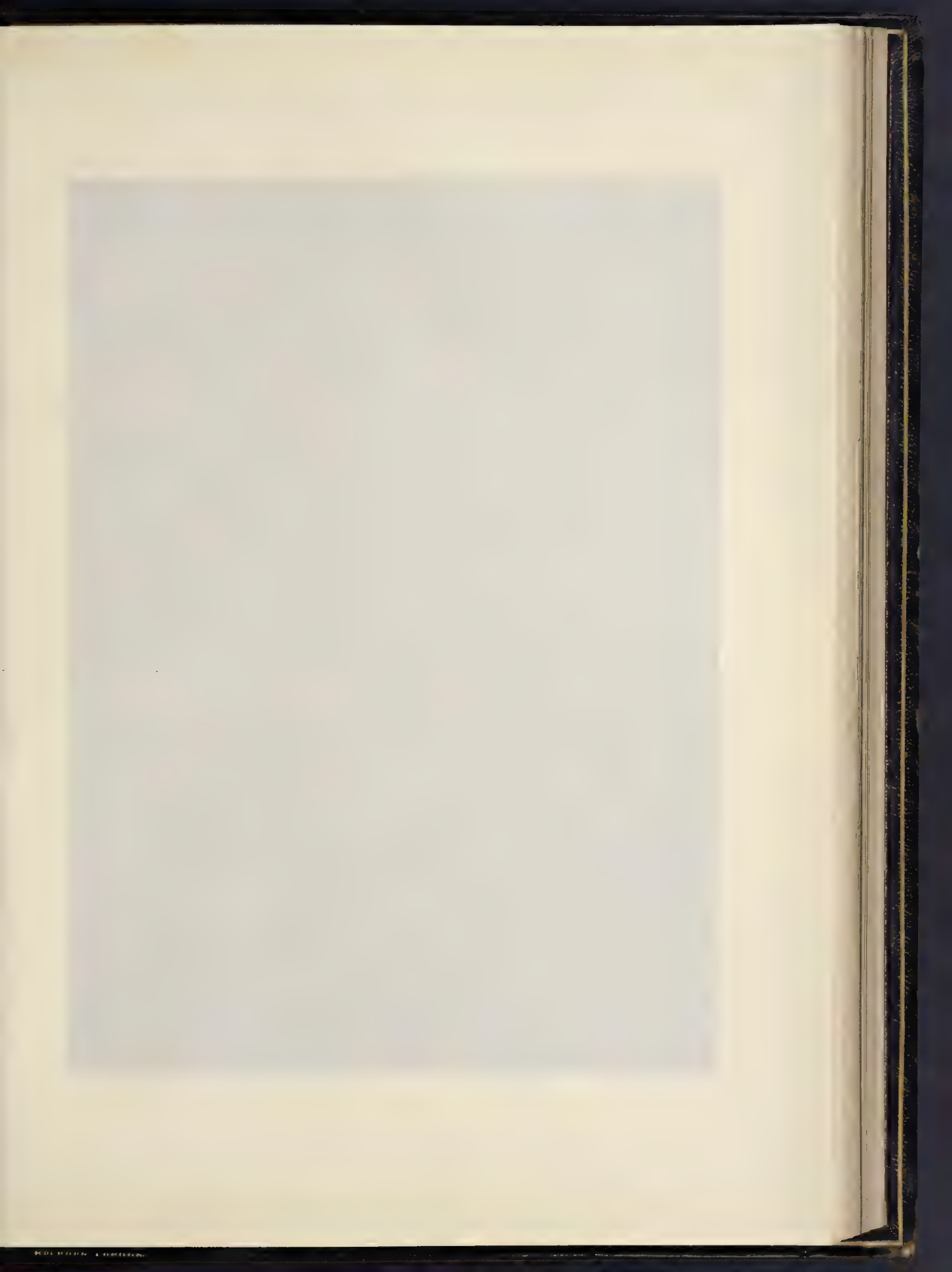
The bird represented is the mythical *hōwō*, and the tree is the *kiri*, from which the imperial crest of that name is formed.

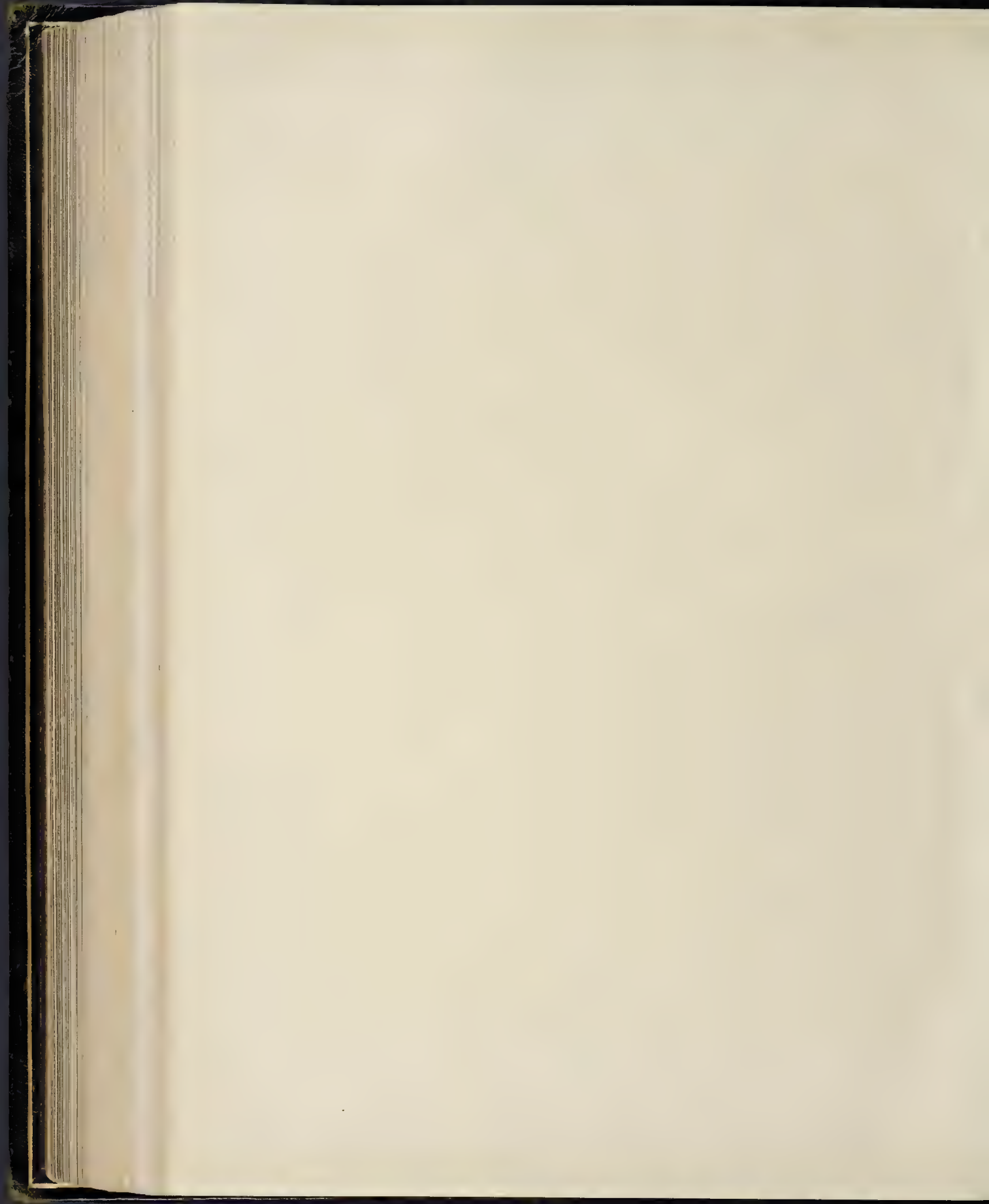
The background is taken from a scarce Japanese book of designs for textile fabrics.

The Tapestry measures 40 inches long by 27 inches wide.

In the possession of MONSIEUR S. BING, of Paris.











SECTION THIRD.—PLATE VII.

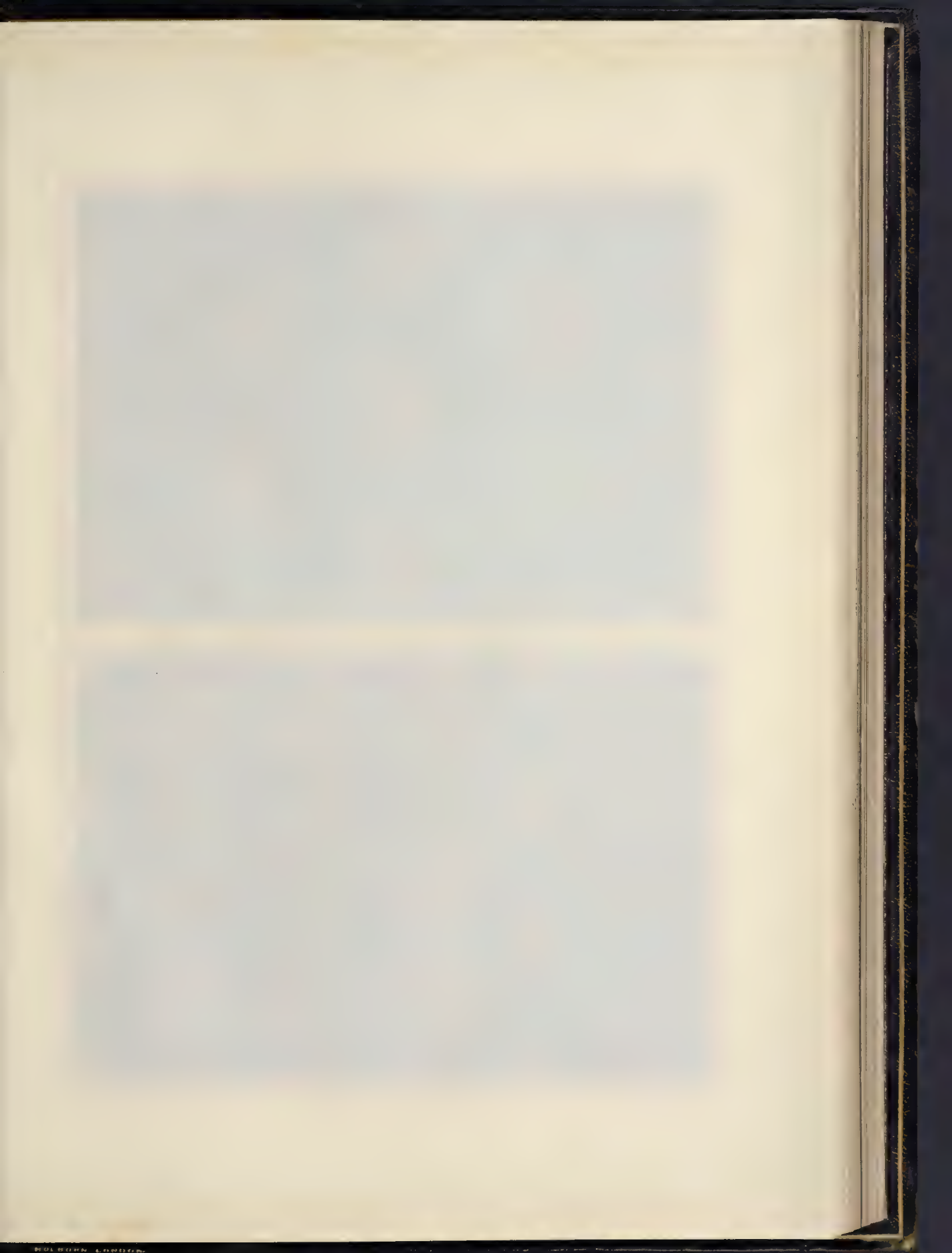
TEXTILE FABRICS.

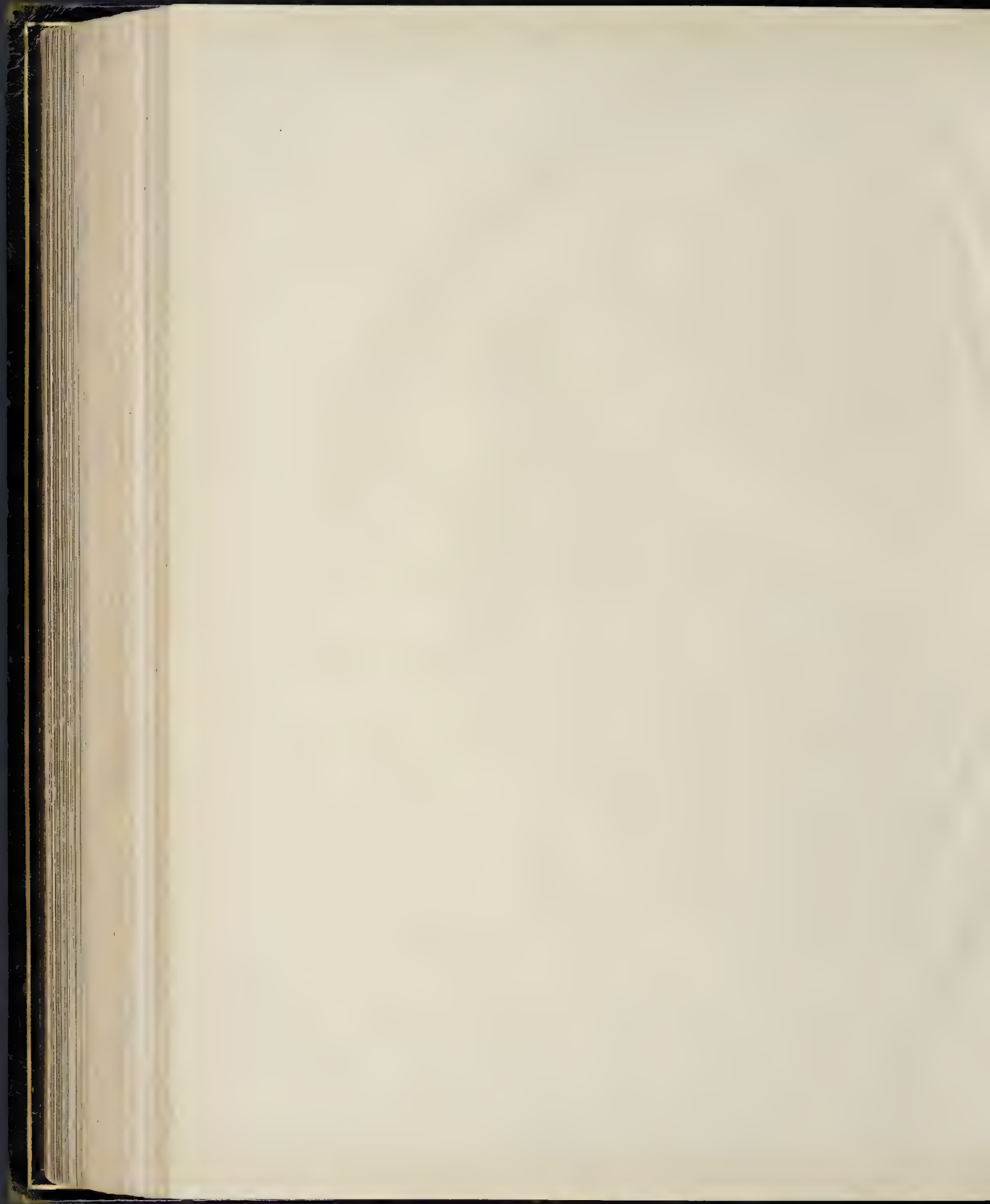


THE silk and gold tissue which forms the subject of the present Plate is a characteristic specimen of early eighteenth century weaving. The design presents several details of great elegance of form; and the leading features are cleverly disposed so as to counteract, as much as possible, the stiffness inherent in designs of a geometrical character.

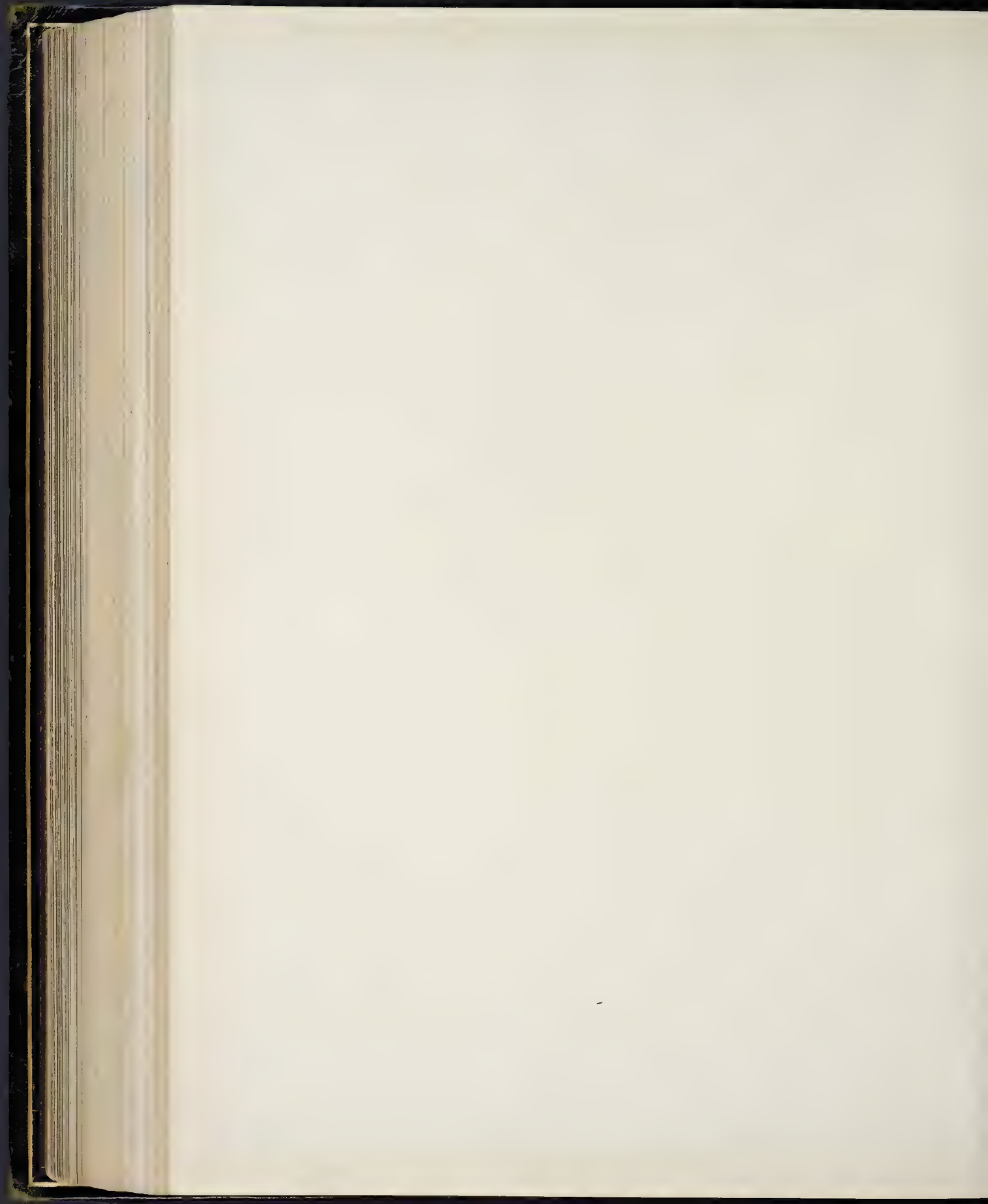
The red ground is produced by the warp, while the other colours and gold are thrown up by the woof in the usual manner. Green is freely introduced throughout the design; the changing colours being confined to the centres of the leading features, the small birds, and the flowers. An almost endless change can be imparted to the colouring of a fabric by this method of weaving.

In the possession of W. LORING ANDREWS, ESQ., of New York, U.S.A.









SECTION THIRD.—PLATE VIII.

TEXTILE FABRICS.



THE two silk and gold fabrics which are carefully and accurately represented in the present Plate, are remarkably fine specimens of Japanese art in this direction. In both the colouring is singularly refined and harmonious, and the loom work is of the most skilful character.

The Brocade on the left of the Plate is evidently, so far as design is concerned, of Chinese origin, probably copied from some sumptuous piece of embroidery, or compiled from details furnished by works of Chinese cloisonné enamel. The design bears strong evidences of being a compilation, for the four rows constituting it do not bear any apparent reference to each other. All the devices employed, however, are precisely similar in style and treatment, each one presenting the conventional cloud treatment so frequently met with in Chinese art. The ground is of deep blue satin, and the pattern is thrown up with thick silk threads and the usual paper gold. The width of the piece, as illustrated, is $26\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

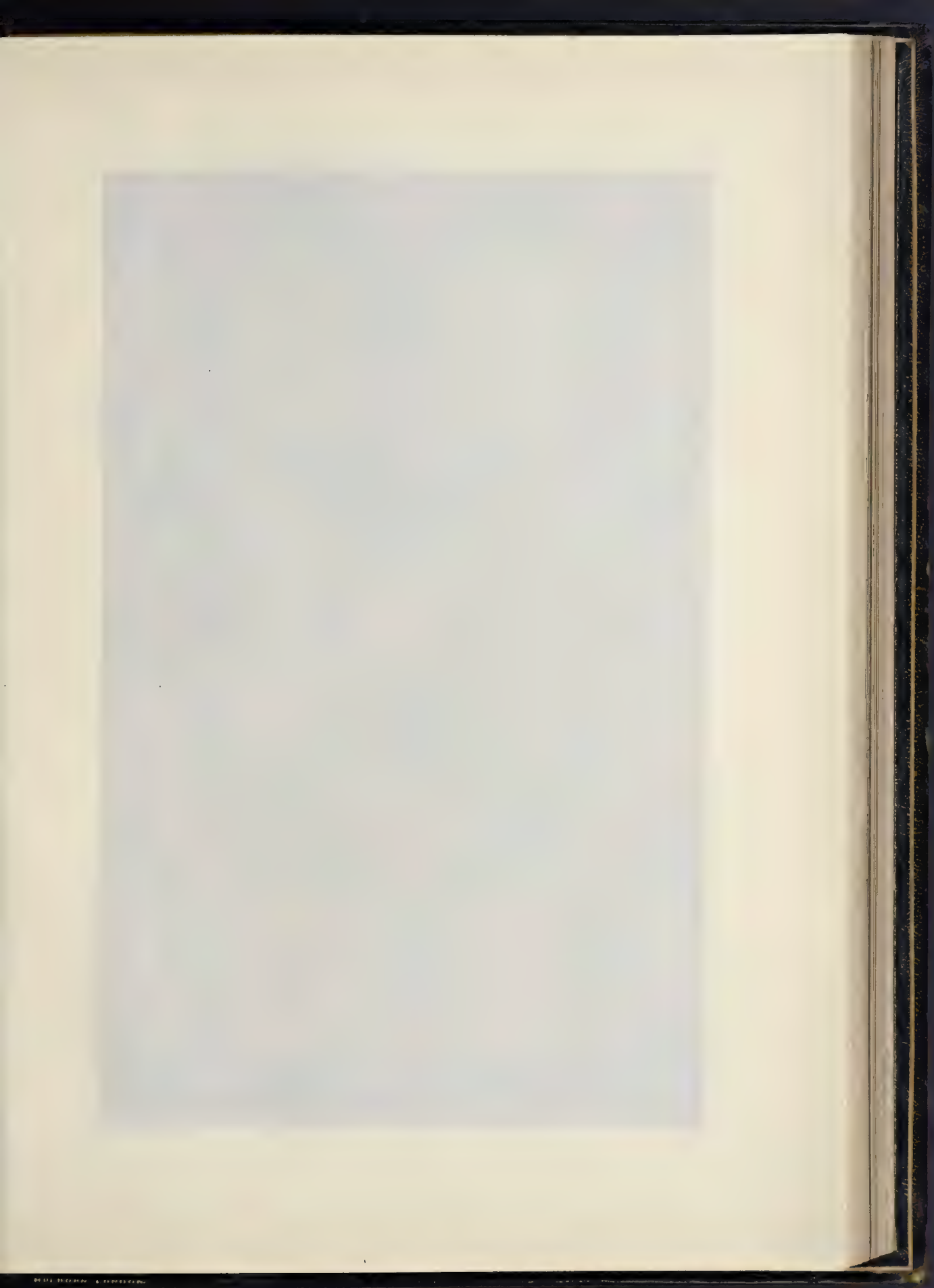
In the possession of W. C. ALEXANDER, ESQ., of London.

THE Brocade on the right of the Plate is woven in precisely the same manner and of the same materials as the preceding. The design is essentially Japanese, and of great beauty of detail and disposition. Unlike the majority of the rich coloured silk and gold brocades of the Japanese weavers, this shows a regular repeat of the colours; that is, the woof threads are not entirely changed in colour at each succeeding repeat of the pattern. It will be observed that the left hand brocade shows this alteration of colour in the repeats of the dragons and small clouds.

The oval form of the large chrysanthemum and other flowers and their arrangement in trefoil fashion are happy ideas on the part of the artist; and it is difficult to imagine a more skilful disposition than that of the small sprays of fruit and flowers which issue from these groups of large flowers. Everything is treated in a way perfectly consistent with the canons of ornamental art; and the whole composition is of the highest suggestive value to the manufacturer of decorative fabrics. The width of the piece shown in the Plate is about 21½ inches.

Both this and the preceding brocade are evidently of some age; probably woven in the end of the last century.

In the possession of SAM COLEMAN, ESQ., of Newport, U.S.A.







SECTION THIRD.—PLATE IX.

TEXTILE FABRICS.



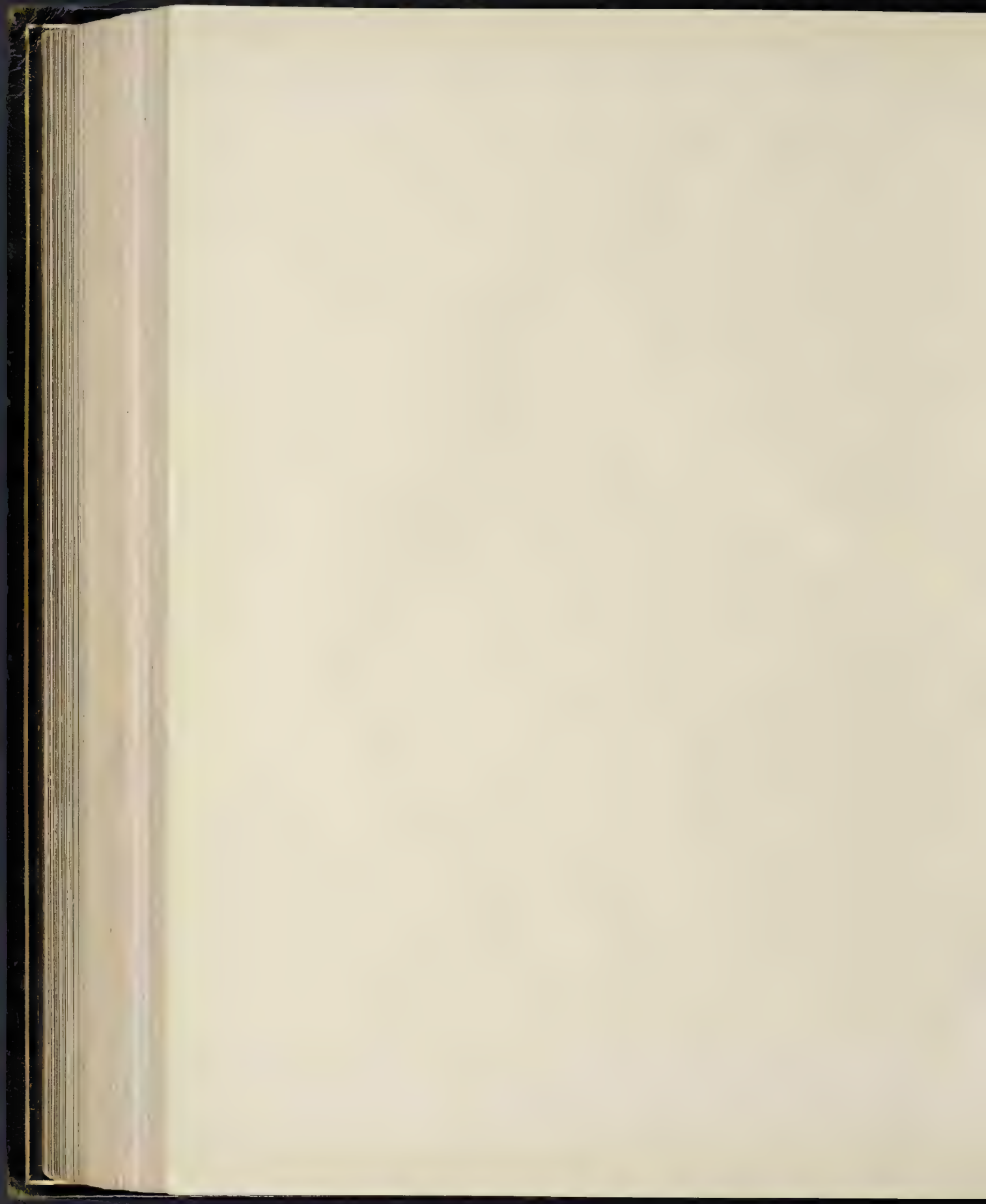
DESIGNS of singularly bold and striking character are frequently met with in the rich velvets and silk and gold brocades used by the ladies of Japan for the *obi* of their national costume. A magnificent example in the former material is given on Plate V. of this Section; and an equally striking design, executed in silk and gold, is furnished by the Plate now under consideration. The representation here given shows the complete design so far as the width of the brocade is concerned, and one repeat of the peony group lengthwise: in that direction the design simply consists of groups of peonies and chrysanthemums alternating. The chevron treatment of the ground, in its very striking contrast of scarlet and black, did not appear in the *obi* while being worn, for the brocade was folded exactly in the centre; each side accordingly presenting a diagonal treatment with a single row of the floral groups. The black of the ground is satin produced by the warp; while the scarlet is produced by the woof, the threads of which are of rich floss silk. The pattern, which consists of bunches of peony and chrysanthemum flowers and leaves, tied with thick twisted cords, and butterflies, is thrown up, with the exception of the black margin lines and veins, by woof threads in differently coloured silk and the usual gilded paper strips. The whole is thick and heavy in material and woven very closely and evenly. The paper strips are tightly woven in on the underside of the fabric, a rather unusual thing in textiles of this class.

This *obi* was probably used for theatrical costume; its gorgeous character rendering it rather unfit for ordinary wear; more especially as the wealthy ladies of old Japan were noted for their taste for subdued colour. The *obi* illustrated on Plate V. is an example of what was worn at court and in the daimios' households in the palmy days of the Empire. The brocade illustrated on the present Plate was woven about the end of the last century. Width $23\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

In the possession of MONSIEUR S. BING, of Paris.











SECTION THIRD.—PLATE X.

TEXTILE FABRICS.



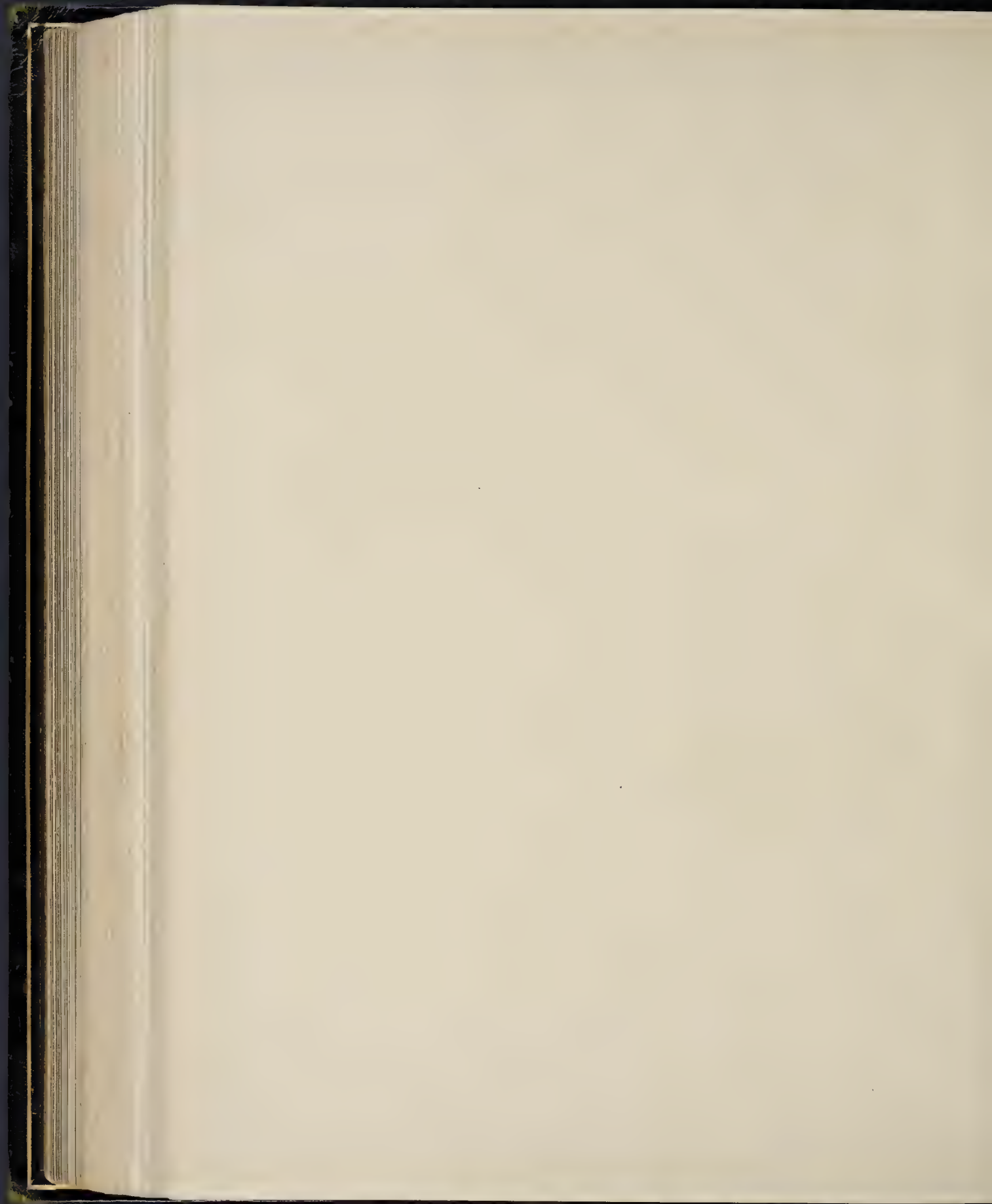
XAMPLES of old Japanese brocades of the character of those represented on the present Plate are extremely rare, even in Japan, and are much prized by collectors of textile fabrics. Both the pieces are in the hands of M. Bing; and were secured by him, along with many other beautiful and interesting old fragments of woven and embroidered materials, from old collections in Japan.

The Brocade represented on the left of the Plate has a ground of dull red and green, the colours being graduated or shaded into one another in a very skilful manner, as indicated. This graduation is produced by both the warp and woof. The warp is dyed both colours, shaded in the yarn at regular intervals; while the woof is uniformly red and green, the line of junction being exactly in the centre of the shading of the warp. The result is a perfect blending of the colours. The flowers and leaves are thrown up in rich floss silks in long threads, clearly in imitation of hand embroidery. The gold is, as usual, in the form of narrow strips of gilded paper. The designs are quaint and stiff in character, not unlike some met with in western mediæval art. The ground is of fine texture and very tightly woven.

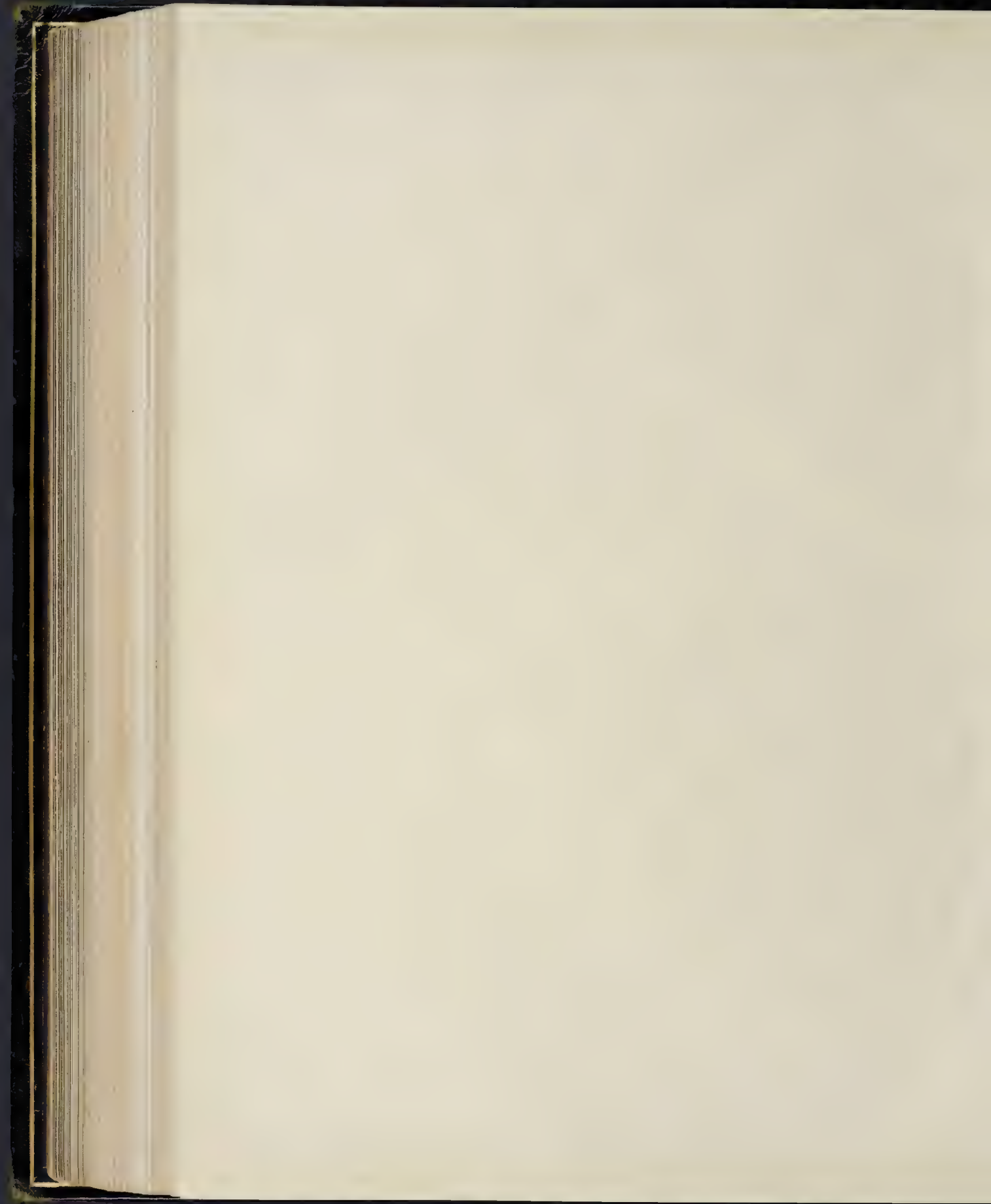
The Brocade on the right hand is precisely similar in mode of manufacture, the ground being in tawny-yellow and red, graduated in the manner above described. The general design may well have been suggested by a rich bed of flowers, seen from an elevation; while the colouring adopted is strictly conventional and decorative. The result is most artistic and charming—full of suggestive value to manufacturers of the present day. The flowers and leaves are in floss silks, producing a brilliant effect against the dull closely woven ground.

These Brocades are among the best specimens of old Japanese weaving which have come before our notice. They are believed to have been produced about the end of the seventeenth century. Width $17\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

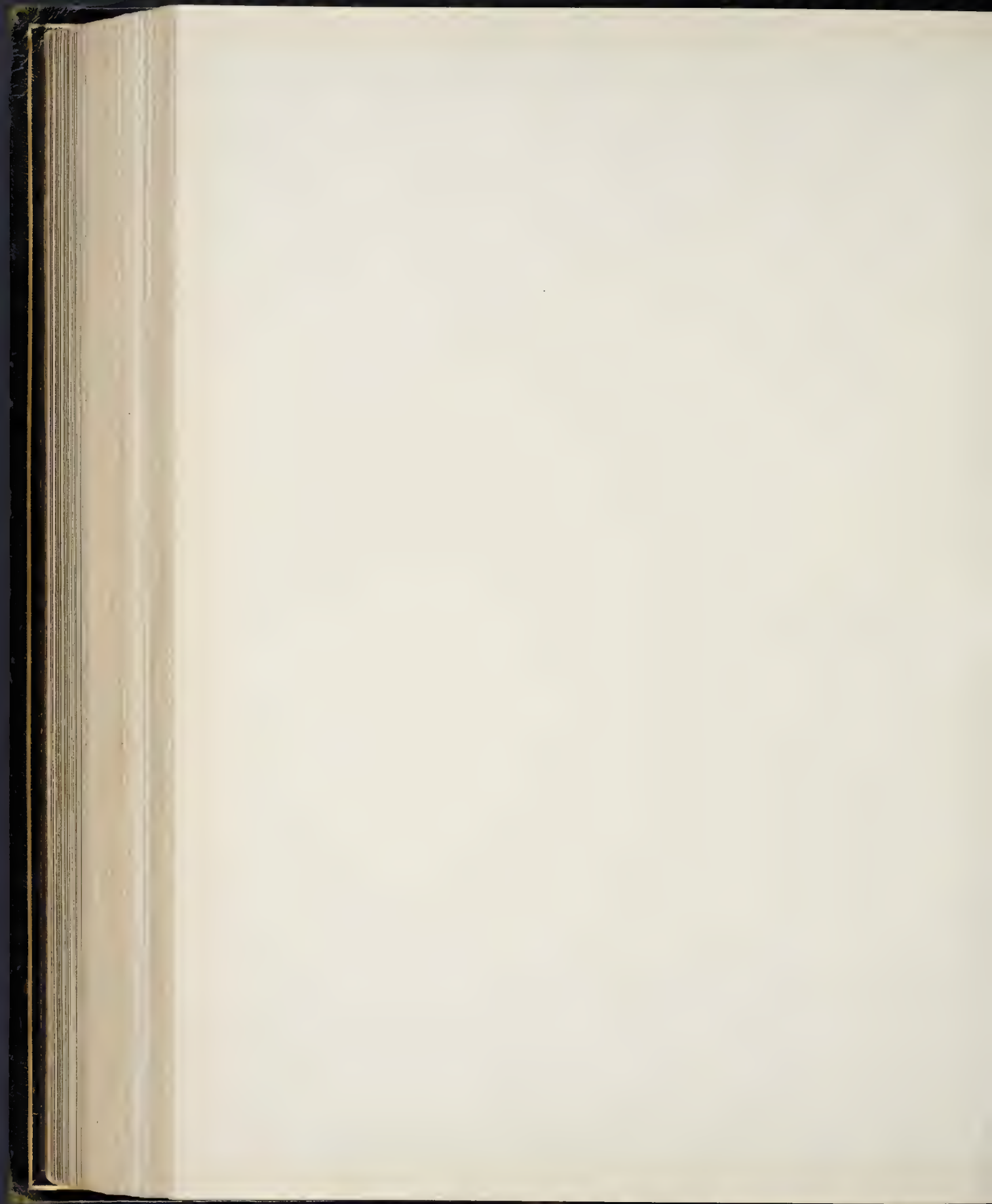
In the possession of MONSIEUR S. BING, of Paris.











SECTION THIRD.—PLATE XI.

TEXTILE FABRICS.



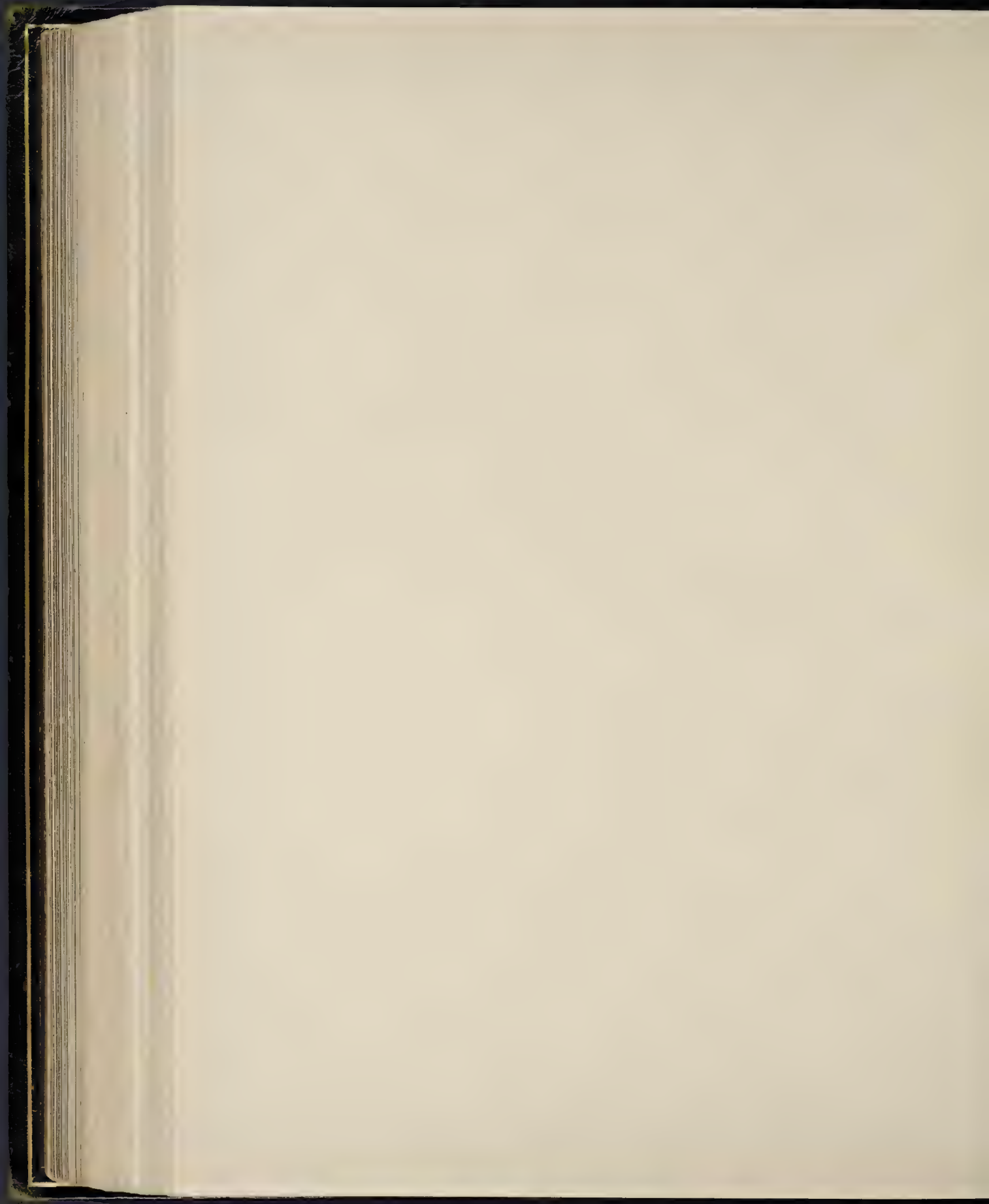
URING the eighteenth century rich silk brocades were produced in large quantities in the Japanese looms; and although, in design and general treatment, they were not equal to the best work of the preceding century, they were extremely beautiful fabrics. Ample proof of this is supplied by the few specimens which have been brought to Europe by collectors and others interested in art manufactures. The most distinguished collector in this department is M. Bing, the owner of the brocade which is represented in the present Plate. It forms one of a large and varied collection of specimens made by that gentleman in Japan.

The ground is of a soft silk, resembling in finish the best European dress silks, while the entire design is in rich floss silk, thrown up in a sort of minute "brick stitch," as met with in embroidery. The floss threads appear on the surface in uniform lengths of about three sixteenths of an inch. Underneath, they pass free from one portion of the pattern to another; in some cases they are between four and five inches long, and quite unattached to the under surface except at their ends, where they pass through the fabric.

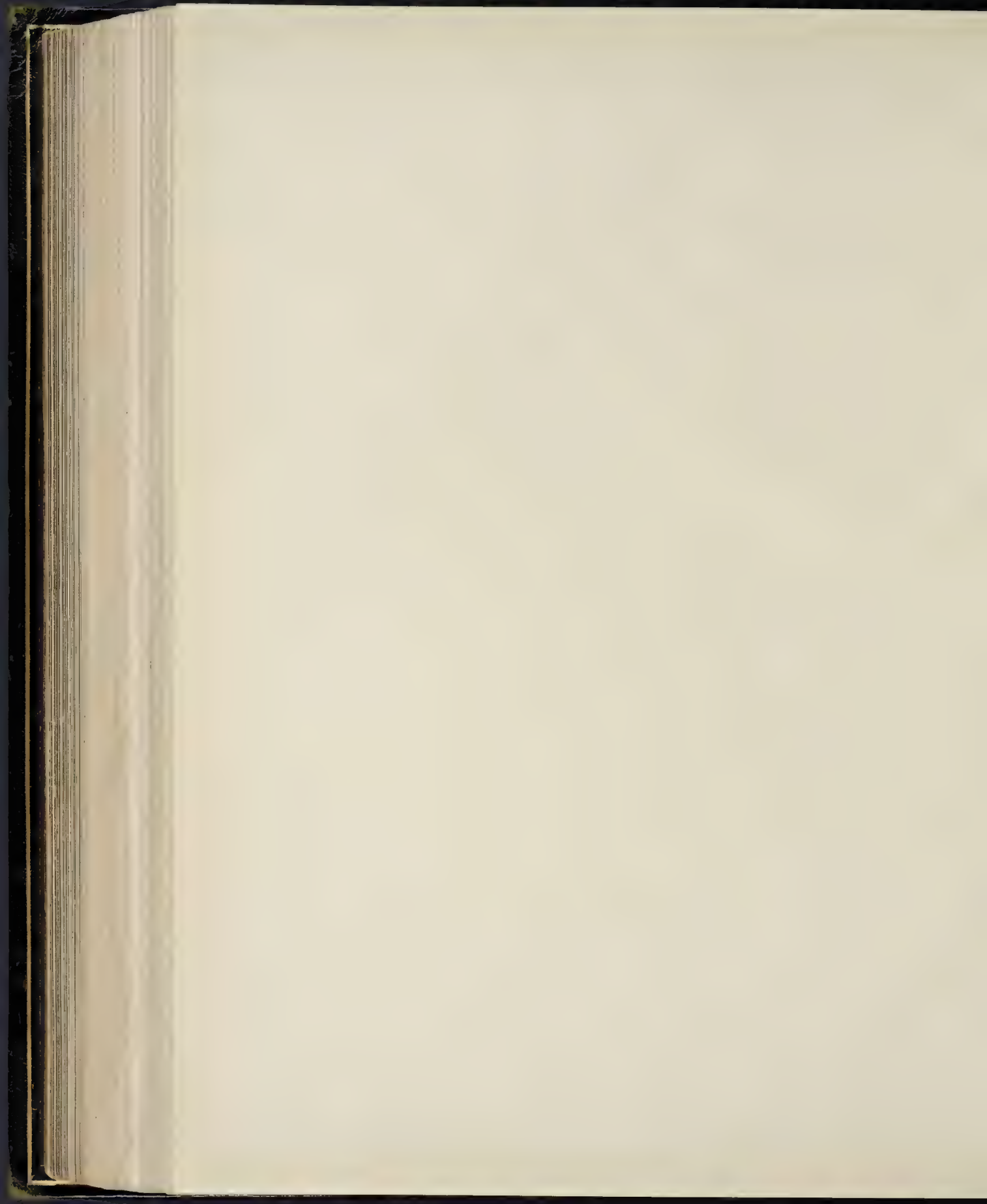
The design consists of a succession of wavy lines, in light blue, forming a sort of trellis pattern, over which is trained, as it were, a peony plant, with large flowers and buds, conventionally treated, and produced in different colours. The leaves, which are few and small, are also in different colours without shading of any kind. The whole composition is of a highly decorative and suggestive character.

This fabric was in all probability woven at Kiōto during the early part of the last century, and used as an *obi*. It is represented in the Plate about three tenths of the real size.

In the possession of MONSIEUR S. BING, of Paris.









Kimono with Pine and Bamboo pattern



SECTION THIRD.—PLATE XII.

TEXTILE FABRICS.



THE object represented on this Plate is a large Robe of extremely rich silk and gold brocade, a fine specimen of Kiōto weaving of the end of the seventeenth century or beginning of the eighteenth. The design is characteristically Japanese, not of a very complicated nature, but so effectively disposed and so varied in colouring as to give the whole the appearance of elaborate hand embroidery. In this respect the fabric resembles the textiles represented on Plate X. of this Section.

The ground is of brown silk which gives great prominence to the brilliantly coloured patterns. The leaves are in shades of green, the berries in scarlet, the large masses of inflorescence in white, the broken trellis work in gold, and the tied bunches of coral-like stems in blue. Such is the colouring of one section of the design, but the repeats show different arrangements of the colours; for instance, the last named details are also produced in brown and gold. The predominating colours are brown and green, but these quiet tints are lighted up by the masses of white, the rich colours of the flowers and berries, and the details thrown up in gold. The feeling throughout is singularly rich and refined.

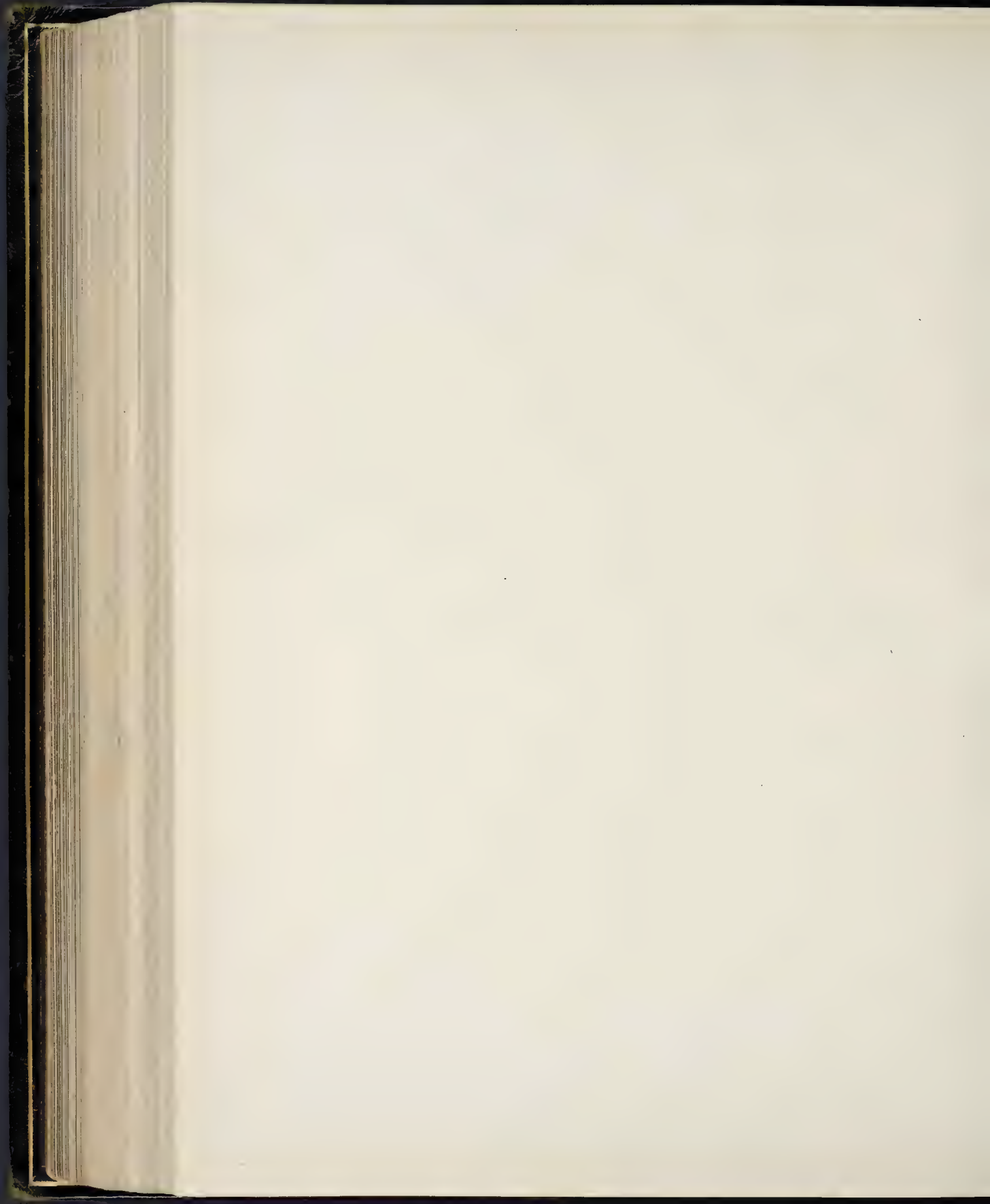
In the possession of DOCTOR CHARLES E. WEST, of Brooklyn, U.S.A.











SECTION THIRD.—PLATE XIII.

TEXTILE FABRICS.



NOTHER Robe of silk and gold brocade, similar in general style of manufacture and date of production to that previously illustrated, forms the subject of the present Plate. It is, however, much more artistically handled in point of design and disposition of ornament; and is altogether more gorgeous in its system of colouring.

The ground of this Robe is parti-coloured, being woven in bands of orange-red, dull green, and brown, graduated or shaded into one another, in the manner shown on Plate X. of this Section. On this ground are zigzag bands, apparently intended to represent garden fences, formed of vertical bars and top rails of gold and colours. Below them are masses of curved lines in gold, arranged into a species of diaper, and probably intended to represent beds of soil. From these are growing beautiful flowering plants, and upon them are thrown faggots and cut sprays of flowers and foliage. Here again is a treatment of ornament peculiarly Japanese, quaint and thoroughly conventional, yet with a strange lingering love of nature evident in every detail.

The pattern repeats itself in various colours, producing a kaleidoscopic effect which baffles description; for the graduated parti-coloured ground, the severe gold ornamentation, and the ever changing tints of the flowers and foliage, produce a dazzling confusion almost impossible to dissect but altogether lovely. It would be difficult to imagine a more gorgeous piece of weaving than the fabric of this Robe. It certainly surpasses everything of the kind which has come before our notice. It is unfortunate that such a fabric cannot be properly represented by any photographic process; but, by the aid of a magnifying glass, the ornamental details and the method of producing them in the loom may be clearly realised from the Plate.

In the possession of DOCTOR CHARLES E. WEST, of Brooklyn, U.S.A.

SECTION FOURTH.

LACQUER.

SECTION FOURTH.

LACQUER.



DEEPLY interesting as all the art industries of Japan unquestionably are, it may be safely said that none has aroused more interest or caused more speculation among art lovers than the beautiful manufacture known as Lacquer. This industry, in its higher developments, is exclusively and characteristically Japanese; it is true that the Chinese have long produced two or three varieties of lacquer work, but these are so inferior in point of manipulation and artistic treatment as in no way to disturb the high and unique position held by the Japanese artists. Much curiosity and speculation have long existed among European collectors with reference to the processes of lacquer working, and the time occupied in producing the objects which have surprised every connoisseur by the marvellous delicacy and accuracy of their manipulation. Now, thanks to the careful and painstaking investigations of Mr. JOHN J. QUIN, Her Majesty's Acting Consul at Hakodate, all these questions are set at rest; and we have great pleasure in expressing our obligations to him for the information he has collected and laid so ably before the student of Japanese art. In addition to this acknowledgment, it is only right to remark that the details given

in the present Section are chiefly derived from his *Report on the Lacquer Industry of Japan*, and a paper read by him before the Asiatic Society of Japan. The sources

of his information, Mr. QUIN acknowledges to be a Japanese work, entitled *Kō-gei shi-riyō*, and notes furnished by a lacquer manufacturer; to these he has supplemented personal observation of the ware in passing through the various stages of its manipulation. He opens his paper with the following appropriate sentence:— "Among the Art Industries of Japan, that of lacquering undoubtedly holds the first place, not only as furnishing occupation to thousands of people in various parts of the country, but also as displaying skill, patience, and in many cases the highest kind of artistic excellence. Its utility also is undoubted, for a large number of the utensils used in Japanese households owe their strength and durability to the lacquer which covers them."

The following short *resumé* of the history of the art, from his pen, cannot fail to be of interest here, notwithstanding that the present Work professes to treat only of the design and manipulation displayed in the Ornamental Art Works of the Japanese.

"It is not known whether the lacquer industry flourished previous to the time of the Emperor Jimmu, B.C. 660-581, *i.e.*, during the ages known as *Kamiya* or times of the Gods, but it is mentioned in the old records, that during the reign of the Emperor Kō-an, who ascended the throne B.C. 392, and was the sixth Emperor from Jimmu Tenno, a person named Mitsune no Sukune was the first on whom the office of Chief of the Imperial Lacquer Department was conferred (*Urushi-be no Muraji*), but though this title existed, unfortunately it is not known what articles were manufactured. The next notice of lacquer is during the reign of the Emperor Kō-toku, who came to the throne A.D. 645. In his time the names of all the offices were changed and that of *Urushi-be no Muraji* was altered to that of *Urushi-be no Tsukasa*. In the various provinces where the lacquer industry was carried on, lacquered articles were received by the Government in lieu of taxes, and a notification was issued that in future the joints of the Imperial coffins should be covered with lacquer. In this reign also, rules were established respecting the *Kammuri* or ceremonial head-covering, and mention is made of the pendant being stiffened with lacquer. From this time lacquer began to be used on numerous articles. In the reign of the Emperor Temmu, A.D. 673-686, a workman whose name has not been preserved invented the manufacture of red lacquer, and he lacquered a set of shelves for the Emperor. In the reign of the Emperor Mommu, A.D. 697-708, the officials of the Lacquer Department were divided into three grades, viz., *Urushi-be no Kami*, *Jō*, and *Sakawan*. Twenty workmen were engaged, and orders were issued that all articles manufactured by these men should be certified by their names, and a prohibition was issued by the Government against the manufacture of lacquer except by these workmen. During the reign of the Emperor Gemmō, A.D. 708-715, and the two following reigns, viz., those of the Empress Genshō, A.D. 715-723, and the Emperor Shōmu, A.D. 724-748, the lacquer industry made great progress, and five different coloured lacquers were used. The practice of inlaying with mother-of-pearl, and of lacquering gold, silver, copper, and leather, was adopted; while about this time, also, gold powdered and mixed with lacquer was applied to the articles. This was the origin of 'lacquer drawing' (*makiye*). In the reign of the Emperor Kwammu, A.D. 782-806, the taste for lacquer ware spread greatly throughout the country, and great attention was paid to this industry. In the following reign of the Emperor Heizei, A.D. 806-809, the Lacquer Department was incorporated with the *Takumi-riyō*, answering to the Public Works Department of the present day. In the reign of the Emperor Daigo, A.D. 898-931, the lacquer industry made rapid strides, and it is mentioned that lacquered articles were largely received in lieu of taxes. It would appear, therefore, that at this period the restriction as to twenty workmen only being permitted to work in lacquer must have been removed, though there is no special mention of the fact in the records of that time. In the reign of the Emperor Sujaku, A.D. 931-936, Taira no Masakado and Fujiwara no Sumitomo rebelled and made war, the first in the eastern provinces (Shimōsa) and the latter in the western provinces (Shikoku), in consequence of which disturbances the lacquer industry in those districts and in the neighbouring provinces declined greatly, and other articles had to be substituted for the lacquer work paid in yearly to the Government for taxes. Only the commonest articles for daily use continued to be manufactured.

"At that time, however, the *Kuges* at Kioto became very luxurious and fond of display, so that in that city alone the lacquer trade continued to prosper, and the manufacture of gold, silver, and mother-of-pearl lacquer ware improved considerably. The attention paid to this branch of industry at Kioto did not flag during the period extending from the reign of the Emperor Murakami, A.D. 947-968, to the reign of the Emperor Antoku, A.D. 1181-1185, and the fame of the Kioto lacquer ware was such, that moneyed persons, and those who were fond of handsome furniture, induced numbers of Kioto workmen to come and settle in their

provinces, and this tended greatly to the development of the lacquer trade. The Bakufu (or Government of the Shoguns) was established during the reign of the Emperor Go-Toba, A.D. 1186-1198, at Kamakura, and thither numbers of artisans in lacquer flocked eagerly, but they did not attain to the excellence of workmanship arrived at by the Kioto tradesmen. Disturbances broke out at Kioto during the reign of the Emperor Chiukio, A.D. 1222, in consequence of which the lacquer industry received a check and declined for a time. During the previous period, viz., between A.D. 947 and 1181, a number of priests as well as officials became very expert in working in lacquer, and they sold quantities of articles of their own manufacture.

"In the reign of the Emperor Go-Kameyama, A.D. 1368-1392, Yamana Ujikiyo, and Ouchi Yoshihiro, two powerful retainers of the Ashikaga family, built castles at Sakai, in the province of Idzumi, and the locality prospered greatly. Numerous workers in lacquer were attracted thither, and this to so great an extent that the ware made there acquired a high reputation. During the reign of the Emperor Go-Hanazono, A.D. 1429-1464, the Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa had a passion for lacquered articles. The best workers assembled round him at Kioto, and as he gave large orders for all kinds of ware the industry was greatly stimulated, while the style and finish improved vastly. During the reign of the Emperor Go-Tsuchi Mikado, A.D. 1465-1500, the country was disturbed. Yoshimasa, however, did not trouble himself about affairs of state, but devoted himself entirely to frivolous pleasures, the encouragement of the fine arts in general, and the manufacture of lacquer, so that this art continued to prosper in Kioto. About this time the Chinese patterns and modes of working were copied and introduced, such as *Tsui-shu* (embossed red lacquer), *Tsui-hoku* (embossed black lacquer), i.e., incised lacquer on wood, and several other methods of applying gold lacquer.

"During the first three quarters of the 16th century Japan was a constant scene of civil wars, which caused the lacquer trade to decline greatly, until the advent of Taiko Hideyoshi, who conquered the whole country and restored quiet, thus enabling the lacquer trade in Kioto and the neighbourhood of Sakai to revive again. It continued to prosper during the reign of the Emperor Go-Yōzei, A.D. 1587-1611, when Iyeyasu came into power, and the lacquer industry flourished all over the country. From that date until now it has spread in a manner unknown in former times."

The principal ingredient used by the Japanese manufacturer is the sap of the *Rhus vernicifera*, the lacquer tree of Japan. This valuable tree is cultivated with more or less care all over the main island of Nippon; and is also grown in several districts of the islands of Kiusiu and Shikoku. A temperate climate appears to suit the trees best, for they grow to the greatest perfection on the main island in the provinces lying northward of 36° north latitude. The trees are propagated both from seed and from cuttings of the roots of healthy young trees. The seed is sown about the beginning of February; and during the first year the plants reach a height of from ten to twelve inches. They are then transplanted, at the distance of about six feet apart, and allowed to grow undisturbed. In ten years the trees attain a height of nine or ten feet, with trunks from eight to ten inches in circumference. A tree of this size and age yields two or three ounces, liquid measure, of sap. The growth of trees raised from root cuttings is somewhat more rapid. The process of propagation is quite simple, and attended with but little labour. The roots of vigorous young trees, which are about half-an-inch in diameter, are selected and cut into six-inch lengths; these are planted in a slanting position, with an inch left exposed above the surface of the soil. The period of planting varies slightly in different localities, but it is commonly confined to the month of March in the temperate districts. From the cuttings shoots averaging nineteen inches in height rise by the following spring; these are transplanted, as in the case of the seedlings, at the distance of six feet apart. The trees grow, under favourable circumstances, about a foot per year, and, accordingly, in ten years are twelve or thirteen feet high; and their trunks attain a circumference of twelve or thirteen

inches. Mr. QUIN remarks:—"It has not hitherto been the custom to bestow any special care on the trees after planting them out, but in cases where leaf or other manure has been applied they are much finer. Of late years hill sides and waste grounds alone have been used for lacquer plantations, as, owing to the rise in the price of cereals and farm produce generally, it does not pay the farmers to have their land cumbered with trees. Those that have been hitherto planted along the borders of the fields are being rapidly used and uprooted, and, where practicable, mulberry trees are planted instead, with a view to rearing silk-worms. Nevertheless, as a good workman is expected during the season to tap an average of 1,000 trees ten years old, and as the province of Yechizen alone sends out about 1,500 'tappers' yearly to the various lacquer districts, it will be seen that an immense production annually takes place, stimulated, doubtless, by the demand for cheap lacquered articles abroad.

"The whole country produces at present on an average from 30,000 to 35,000 tubs per annum, each tub being of about four gallons capacity. Some 70 to 80 per cent. of this total amount is produced from Tōkiō northwards. Nearly one-half of the lacquer produced is sent to the Osaka market, where it is prepared as required and resold all over the western and southern provinces, the remaining portion being used up locally and in Tōkiō."

The age at which trees are tapped varies greatly. Some are tapped when about four years old, but the generality of cultivated trees are allowed to grow ten years before they are denuded of their sap. Very old trees are said to yield the best and strongest lacquer; their sap is accordingly collected separately, and sold at a high price. The best sap for transparent lacquer is obtained from trees from one to two hundred years old. The present article would be incomplete without some allusion to the operations of tapping; and as they are so carefully given in the *Government Report*, we quote them here:—

"The tools used in obtaining the lacquer are as follows:—*Kawa muki* (bark parer), a curved knife with which the workman smooths all inequalities of the bark before tapping the tree. *Yeda-gama* (branch sickle), an instrument with a gouge on one side and a knife on the other, fitted with a piece of bamboo to give the hand a good hold when tapping branches. *Kaki-gama* (scraping sickle), a similar instrument, without the piece of bamboo used for tapping trees generally. *Yeguri* (a gouge), used in autumn to scrape the bark smooth before giving the final cut with the *Kaki-gama*. *Natsu-bera* (summer spatula), used for scraping the sap out of the incisions into the receptacle named *gō*. *Hōchō* (knife), used for cutting the bark of branches in obtaining *seshime* or branch lacquer. *Seshime-bera* (seshime spatula), used for collecting the sap which exudes from the incisions in the bark of the branches. *Gō*, the bamboo or wooden pot, in which the sap is put as it is collected. *Gō-guri* (pot gouge), a long straight knife for scraping the lacquer out of the pot into the tub. *Te-bukuro* (glove), worn by the tapper to protect his hand from contact with the sap.

"The first tapping takes place about the beginning of June. Having cleared away the grass from the roots, the workman makes the round of his allotted trees, marking each with small notches about half an inch long. The first of these notches is made about six inches from the bottom of the tree on the right-hand side; the next, one 'hand stretch' higher up on the left-hand side; the next, one 'hand stretch' higher on the right, and so on, alternately as far as the workman can reach. These preliminary markings, which are to determine all the places for subsequent tapping, take fully four days. The tapper then goes round, provided with the bark scraper, the ordinary scraping sickle, the summer spatula, and the pot to hold the lacquer, and first smoothing the bark where required gives one cut above and one cut below the two lower marks, and one cut above the remainder of the other marks, the cut being in each case about an inch and a-half long. After giving the cut the instrument is reversed, and the knife is run along the incision to

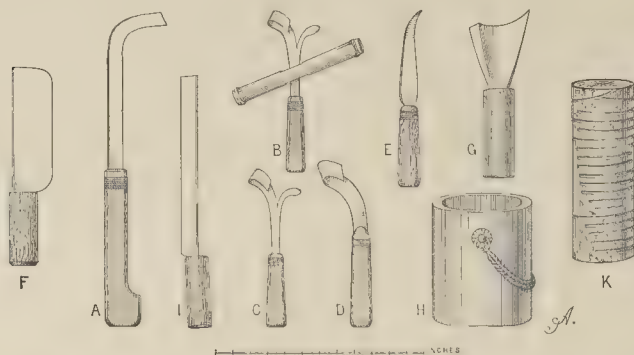
insure the bark being entirely cut through. This process is repeated every four days, each incision being made a little longer than the preceding one, up to the fifth tapping, inclusive, after which the remaining incisions are made of the same length. At each round, when all the requisite incisions have been made on the tree, the workman gathers the sap which has exuded with the spatula, beginning with the two lowest incisions, and so on to the uppermost cut. Twenty-five is considered the normal number of cuts, which, at the rate of one incision at each place every four days, occupy one hundred working days, and allowing for some twenty days of rain during which the sap cannot be drawn, the season is brought to a close by the end of September. . . . When the full number of incisions has been given, the workman gives an extra long cut underneath all the initial notches on each tree to obtain the sap which has collected there, and another above the uppermost cut of each set. These incisions are called *Ura-me* (back marks). The workman also makes a number of cuts, each about a foot apart, in all the branches whose diameter exceeds one inch. The next operation is called *Tomé* (the finish). This consists in a number of incisions completely encircling the tree wherever the workman perceives a likely place. The next process consists in cutting off all the branches: the larger ones are once more tapped after being cut off to extract any sap that may still remain in them, and the small branches which have not yet been tapped are tied in bundles and steeped in water for about ten days. When taken out and dried the bark is cut with a knife, and the sap which exudes is collected with the branch spatula, and is called *Seshime* lacquer. It is also known as *Yeda urushi*, or branch lacquer.

"The sap obtained from the first five cuts above each notch is poor, containing, as it does, a large proportion of water; the middle fifteen cuts produce the best sap, and the sap obtained from the last five incisions is poor, and lacks consistency. Again, the sap obtained from the *Ura-me* (back marks) and *Tomé* (finishing) cuts is very good, and dries quickly. The sap from the first twenty-five cuts is mixed and sold together; but the *Ura-me* and *Tomé* sap is almost always mixed and sold separately. The operations above described kill the tree in one season, but frequently the tree is made to last two years or more, by giving only half the number of incisions, and reserving the *Ura-me* and *Tomé* cuts for the final year. The sap obtained the second and following years is, however, of an inferior quality, and this method is only resorted to by private individuals, who tap their own trees during the intervals of farming. Ordinarily, a wholesale dealer in lacquer buys so many thousand trees from the owner, and, as a matter of course, extracts the sap with as little delay as possible, making a contract for the purpose with professional tappers. A first-rate workman will receive over 100 yen (equal at the present low rate of exchange, to nearly 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ sterling) for the season, and can collect four and-a-half tubs (equivalent to eighteen gallons), but the average receive 75 yen, and collect proportionately less. The present price per tub of lacquer ranges from 90 to 100 yen. (1882.) . . . It should be mentioned that the above description of the method pursued in tapping the lacquer tree is that which is recognised as the proper one; but the rule is not rigidly observed, the style and size of the tree, and the caprice of the workman, combining to cause variations in the number of incisions given in each series."

The illustrations given on the following page show the forms of the several implements used in tapping the trees and collecting the sap. They are all drawn to one scale, so that their respective dimensions may readily be realised.

The crude lacquer, as collected from the trees, termed *ki-urushi*, is sold to the wholesale dealers, who dispose of it to the lacquer merchants. These latter prepare it in different ways to suit the several purposes for which it will be required by the lacquer workers. The first process is to rid the crude material of the water which has exuded from the trees along with the sap. This is done by exposing the lacquer in large shallow wooden vessels, and stirring it in the sunshine. To further assist the evaporation of the original water, about one per cent. of fresh water is stirred in three times a day for two or three days, according to the power of the sun. The fresh water combines with the natural water, and both readily evaporate together. Until this process has been carefully completed, the lacquer will not dry on any material. Mr. Quin draws our attention to an interesting fact. He says, "A very remarkable property of lacquer should be mentioned. If crude lacquer, which is originally of the colour and consistency

of cream, is exposed to the sun for a few days without adding water, it loses its creamy colour, and becomes quite black, or nearly so, but also becomes thinner



A is the KAWA-MUKI, a curved knife securely fixed in a long handle of wood. B is the YEDA-GAMA, a blade divided into two members, one of which is sharpened as a knife at its extremity, and the other is bent round so as to form a loop for cutting semicircular channels in the bark: it is fixed in a wooden handle, and has a piece of bamboo placed loosely on the blade as indicated; by this the tapper exercises full power over the tool. C is the KAKI-GAMA, a strong blade bent into a loop and fixed in a wooden handle; this is used for cutting the channels in the trunks of the trees: it is very similar to the preceding, but without the transverse piece of bamboo. D is the VEGURI, a broad blade bent into an open loop and sharpened along its inner edge, fixed in a handle of wood; this is used in autumn to scrape the bark smooth prior to giving the final cut with the *kaki-gama*, C. E is the NATSU-BERA, a blunt-pointed blade slightly curved at its extremity for the purpose of scraping the sap from the incisions in the bark. F is the HOCO, a strong blade used for cutting the bark of branches in obtaining branch lacquer. G, SESHIM-BERA, a short piece of steel, shaped and curved as indicated, fixed obliquely in a round handle; this is employed to scrape the sap from the incisions in the bark of the branches. H is the GO, the vessel made from a length of bamboo, lacquered internally, and carried by a handle of plaited string; this is the receptacle into which the sap is dropped as it is scraped from the incisions. I is the GO-GURI, a long straight blade with a blunt edge, fixed in a short wooden handle; this is used for scraping the lacquer out of the pot into the stock tubs. K is a piece of the trunk of a lacquer tree, showing the appearance of the bark when fully incised: the incisions are about three-eighths of an inch apart.

and transparent, or rather translucent, as can be seen when it is smeared on a white board. It will not now, however, dry if applied to an article, even if kept a month or more in the damp press. But if water is mixed with the lacquer which has thus been exposed and become black, it at once loses the black colour and its transparency, and becomes again of a creamy colour, though slightly darker, as if some coffee had been added, than at first. After evaporating this water, it can then be used like any ordinary lacquer, either alone or in mixtures, and will dry in the damp press, during which process it again turns black. What lacquer workers have found their greatest stumbling-block is the difficulty of obtaining a clear transparent varnish. What is called transparent varnish is really black to the eye, and requires grinding and polishing after application before it presents a brilliant surface, becoming also much lighter after a little time. It would be a new era in the manufacture of lacquer ware if a method could be discovered of rendering the lacquer varnish perfectly clear and light coloured when so desired, without depriving it of its drying qualities, and also if colours could be used with it other than those hereafter mentioned."

As we are on the subject of drying, and as the term "damp press" has been used, it may be desirable to explain what that article is. It is a remarkable fact that lacquer, however prepared, will not dry perfectly, on any material, in the open air, but requires a damp, close atmosphere to perfect the operation. When an object is coated, it has, accordingly, to be enclosed in a cupboard, the inside of which has been damped with water, and tightly shut from the external air. The damp press (*muro*) is usually constructed of wood, left unplanned inside, so as to retain the water which is brushed over it, and closed by tightly-fitting shutters or doors. A damp cave or cellar has been often used for large works, such as those met with in temple decorations. Under favourable conditions the lacquer takes from six to fifty hours to dry in the press, according to its composition and the temperature of the atmosphere. Lacquer left exposed to the open air will run and harden with a tack which cannot afterwards be got rid of. Why a damp, confined air is necessary for perfect drying has not been satisfactorily explained, but it evidently has some connection with the fact that crude lacquer will not dry after exposure to the air, unless water has been mixed with it.

The retail merchants have their own ways of preparing the crude lacquer for the different purposes for which it is required, and these they keep secret. The ordinary processes are, however, pretty well known.

Seshime-urushi, or branch lacquer, is in great demand by the lacquer workers; but as its supply is limited, the dealers sell a compound for ordinary use, stated to contain pure *seshime-urushi*, the best *ki-urushi*, *ura-me*, and *tomé* sap; to these are added a jelly made from seaweed, called *funori*, and finely-grated sweet potatoes.* This is coloured as required.

Nakanuri-urushi, or middle coating lacquer, is simply good *ki-urushi* exposed to the action of the sun, until its water has been thoroughly evaporated and its colour deepened to a rich transparent brown. As its name implies, it is used for under or middle coats, chiefly in the bringing up of the best work.

Rō-urushi, or black lacquer, is prepared from crude or branch lacquer by the addition of colouring material, a liquid termed *haguro*, made by boiling iron filings in strong rice vinegar, and subjecting the mixture to the sun's rays for several days, stirring it frequently until it becomes an intense black. About five per cent. of this fluid is sufficient to stain the lacquer. The result is a varnish not unlike our "black Japan varnish" in appearance and consistency, of an intense black in the mass, but a deep transparent brown when smeared thinly on white paper.

* "True branch lacquer becomes extremely hard when once dry, but used alone will not dry under some twenty days, so that now, when time is an object, the pure sap is but little used. Previous to the Revolution of 1868 branch lacquer of a very superior quality, and which would dry quickly, was obtained by using the young shoots which sprouted yearly from the roots after the trees had been cut down. This kind was called *Ki-seshime* (crude branch lacquer), and was made under directions from the Government, who received it as taxes; but the practice has been discontinued of late. The price of pure branch lacquer is—owing to the difficulty in drying—only 70 per cent. of ordinary good lacquer."—Mr. QUIN'S Report.

Nuritate-urushi, or finishing lacquer, is a compound of *ki-urushi*, a small quantity of turpentine, and some water collected from whetstones on which steel tools have been sharpened, called *tō-midzu*. The compound is well mixed and exposed to the action of the sun, which, acting on the iron particles introduced by the whetstone water, darkens it, while it evaporates the water and renders the lacquer fit for use. *Nuritate-urushi* is chiefly employed for the final coating of ordinary ware, and receives no polishing by hand. Lacquer for the finishing coatings of common ware is made from the above, with the addition of *ye* oil (*perilla ocymoides* oil). That to which only a small quantity of oil is added is termed *jō-hana-urushi*, common finishing lacquer. *Jō-chiu* or *chiu-hana*, and *jō-tame* or *ge-hana*, are the names given to inferior compounds in which more and more oil is mixed. These lacquers dry with a soft but brilliant surface, such as is met with on very common articles.

We have now to glance at the several compounds used for coloured and gold lacquer, flat and raised.

The mixture in which vermilion and the other pigments commonly used are ground, is composed of the best *ki-urushi* or *suki-urushi*, transparent lacquer, mixed with from 25 to 50 per cent. of *ye* oil, with the addition of pure water: this is exposed to the sun in the usual manner until all the water has been got rid of. As it is most commonly employed for red lacquer, it is called *shu-urushi*, or vermilion lacquer.

For working with gold, *koban*, silver, or tin, the following preparations are used; the first in order being that on which the metals are powdered. This is a mixture called *rō-se-urushi*, composed of *sesshime* and *rō-urushi*: it is used in all cases save when the natural grain of a wood ground has to be seen between the metallic dust or scales. *Nashiji-urushi*, or "pear basis lacquer," is the transparent lacquer used for coatings over the metallic powderings. It is simply the finest crude sap obtained from old trees, freed, by natural precipitation, from its impurities, mixed with clean water, and exposed to the air and sunshine. It is made ready for use by careful filtration through *Yoshino-kami*, a very thin paper made at Yoshino. When inferior gold or tin dust is used, the lacquer is coloured with more or less gamboge, so as to impart a rich hue to the inferior alloy, or to make the tin dust imitate gold. *Yoshino-urushi*, a crude lacquer collected in the district of Yoshino, is employed for the final coatings before polishing. This is sometimes mixed with about 30 per cent. of camphor to render it more fluid and easier to spread: it is called *Yoshino-nobe-urushi*.

The under coat lacquers, *shita-maki-urushi* and *shita-maki nobe-urushi*, are prepared from *sesshime-urushi* and red oxide of iron, in equal parts by weight. The latter, as its name implies, is the spreading variety, to which some camphor has been added. The addition of camphor to lacquer thins it, and causes it to flow better: it does not, however, in any other way improve its character, and

is seldom used save when economy of material is a desideratum. *Shita-maki-urushi*, which has been kept several months until it has become thick, is employed for drawing the fine lines on raised work. The consistency it has acquired by age prevents the lines from spreading after they are drawn, and secures their desirable relief. This is designated *ke-uchi-urushi*, or inside line lacquer. For shading with very delicate lines and touches, on both flat and raised ware, *kuma-urushi*, or shading lacquer, is used: this is prepared from fine *jō-hana-urushi* and best lamp-black, carefully incorporated.

The most important material employed in the fabrication of raised ware, is the *taka-maki-urushi*, or raising lacquer. This, according to Mr. Quin, is made in the following manner:—"A certain quantity of *rō* or *nuritate* is taken and divided into three parts. To one part is added lamp-black and camphor in equal portions of bulk. These after being well mixed are boiled together; then the other two portions are added, and the whole stirred together, and afterwards filtered through paper. It is boiled more or less according to the season. In summer, when lacquer dries quickly, it is boiled for a longer period, while in winter, or during cold weather, when lacquer naturally takes longer to dry, the mixture is boiled for a shorter time. The reason why *taka-maki* is thus purposely rendered soft is explained by the fact that otherwise the upper surface would harden at once, while the under portion (*taka-maki* being applied thickly), being excluded from the upper air, would not be able to dry, and later the top surface would crack and show fissures, whereas the introduction of camphor renders it soft and much slower to dry, and the whole has thus time to harden equally. Camphor being volatile is gradually lost, and the composition becomes quite hard."

Having briefly described the modes of collecting the crude varnish from the trees, and of preparing it for the use of the lacquer worker; and having enumerated the chief varieties of lacquer employed, and the materials of which they are composed, we may now consider the processes of manufacture, describing as we proceed the materials and implements used by the artizan in all the different stages of his operations.

PROCESSES OF MANUFACTURE.

The following processes are those usually employed in the production of high-class black lacquer upon wood, termed *honji*, or "real basis." The processes are more numerous than complicated, but all demand skill, care, and patience for their satisfactory completion.

The best woods for this species of lacquer-work are those called by the Japanese *hi-no-ki* (*Chamaecyparis obtusa*), *ho-no-ki* (*Magnolia hypoleuca*), *kiri* (*Paulownia imperialis*), and *keyaki* (*Planera japonica*). The first named is a favourite and very suitable wood for boxes, panels, and all kinds of cabinet work, chiefly because it admits of a high finish and is not liable to warp; the second has been almost universally used for lacquered sword-sheaths, and other fine works requiring a tough wood; the third is a smooth-grained light wood, commonly employed in the construction of large boxes for clothes, &c.; and the last is most suitable for turning and other ornamental operations.*

When the article which is to be lacquered is handed over to the lacquer worker, he first of all carefully smoothes its surface; and then examines all the joints which are likely to open through the warping or contraction of the wood. These he will have to protect in such a manner that any slight opening or starting will not extend to the lacquer surface. With a small gouge he cuts away the wood on each side of the joint, forming a shallow channel, the joint running along its centre. When this has been done, the entire surface receives a coat of *seshime-urushi*, prepared as already described; and the article is placed in the damp press for about twelve hours. This operation is termed *ki-ji-gatame*—"hardening the wooden basis." It is simply priming the surface of the wood, as a painter would prime with a thin coat of oil colour. When removed from the press, the lacquer is found to have sunk in, and to have formed a hard dry surface. The workman now fills up the channels, over the joints, with a preparation called *kokuso*, made of finely chopped hemp and rice starch, with sufficient *seshime-urushi* to produce a thick pasty mass. This tenacious material is pressed into the channels with a spatula (*hera*), of the form shown in the cut on the opposite page, made of *hi-no-ki*, and enough is left above the general

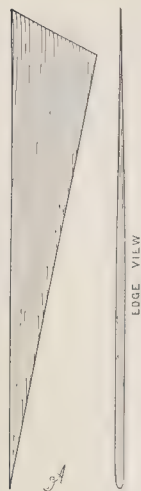
* The following list of woods, given by Mr. Quin as used in making lacquer ware, will not be uninteresting to our readers.

"The woods chosen for lacquering on are naturally selected according to the use to which the lacquered article is to be put. For shelves, cabinets, and boxes of all kinds, the following are principally used, and are set down in the order of their excellence:—*HI-NO-KI* (*Chamaecyparis obtusa*). This is by far the best wood for making boxes, as it does not warp. *KIRI* (*Paulownia imperialis*). A light wood used for clothes boxes, which are only lacquered on the outside. It is also used for making tea-caddies, as the wood has no smell. *HO-NO-KI* (*Magnolia hypoleuca*). All sword sheaths have hitherto been made of this wood. *SAWARA* (*Chamaecyparis pisifera*). This is a wood of a coarser grain than *Hi-no-ki* (*Ch. obtusa*). *HIME-RO-MATSU* (*Pinus parviflora*). This wood is used for carved figures of men, animals, &c. It is not liable to split or crack. *TSUGA* (*Abies tsuga*). *HIBA* (*Thujopsis dolabrata*). Used for making cheap articles. *AKAMATSU* (*Pinus densiflora*). *SUGI* (*Cryptomeria japonica*). This wood is only used in making the cheapest and most inferior goods.

"The following woods are mostly used in the manufacture of such articles as are turned in a lathe, as bowls, rice cups, round trays, &c.:—*KEYAKI* (*Planera japonica*), the best being obtained from the Province of Hiuga. *SHOJI* (*Fraxinus*). *SAKURA* (*Prunus pseudo-cerasus*). *KATSURA* (*Cercidiphyllum japonicum*). *TCHO* (*Ginkgo biloba*). *I-go*. Grown in large quantities in the neighbourhood of Hakone. It is principally used in the manufacture of toys and cheap articles. *BUNA*. Principally used in the district of Aidzu for the same kind of utensils as *KEYAKI* and *SAKURA*, but being a brittle wood, it cannot be turned in a lathe to make such fine articles; those made of this wood are coarser and heavier.

"For raised gold lacquering over the unvarnished surface, the following hard ornamental woods are often used:—*SHITAN*. *TAGAYASAN*. *KARIN* (quince). *KUWA* (mulberry). *KEYAKI* (*Planera japonica*) Ornamental grain."

surface of the article to admit of a subsequent rubbing down. The article is again placed in the damp press for from forty to fifty hours, or until the preparation has become thoroughly set. The *kokuso* is now roughly rubbed down, and covered with a thick coat of *sabi*, a mixture of two parts of burnt clay,* moistened with water, and one and a half parts of *seslime-urushi*. The article is returned to the press for about twelve or fourteen hours; and afterwards the *kokuso*, with its hard coating of *sabi*, is carefully ground down with a white whetstone (*shiro-to*), until its surface is perfectly smooth and level with the surrounding wood.



HEPA. The spatula of *he-no ki*, used for laying on the *kokuso* and the other lacquer preparations.

The next process is the covering of the article with hempen cloth (*nuno*), with the view of preventing the wood from cracking and the joints from springing. The cloth also forms an admirable basis for the upper coatings of lacquer. The process consists of covering the surface of the article with what is called *mugi-urushi*—wheaten lacquer, a fine paste made of wheaten flour and *seslime-urushi*, thoroughly incorporated—and laying on this thin hempen cloth, carefully trimmed, joined, and pressed perfectly flat to the surface of the wood. The hardening of the *mugi-urushi* requires an enclosure in the damp press for at least twenty-four hours. On removal from the press, the surface of the cloth, which has become very hard from its saturation with the paste, is pared with a sharp knife;

or, if the article is a panel or presents flat surfaces, the chief inequalities of the cloth are removed with a small plane or some such tool. At this stage the texture of the cloth can be seen and felt; and to obliterate this, a thick coating of *sabi* is evenly spread with the spatula, and pressed into all interstices of the material; and finally dried for twenty-four hours in the press. Three successive coats of a preparation called *jino-ko* are now laid on with the spatula; the article being placed in the damp press for four and twenty hours after each application. *Jino-ko* consists of burnt clay, finely powdered, and mixed with *seslime-urushi*, in the proportion of one of clay to two parts of lacquer. The respective coatings are laid on very thinly and smoothly. Above these are laid, with the spatula, two coatings of *kiri-ko*, a mixture composed of one part of ordinary burnt clay, one part of burnt clay from Mount Inari, and three parts of branch lacquer; the article being placed in the press for a period of twenty-four hours, after the application of the first coating; and after the second application it is allowed to

* The best clay, termed *to-no-ko*, is procured from Mount Inari, near Kioto; it is burnt and reduced to a fine powder.

dry for about three days, or for such a time as may be requisite to thoroughly harden and consolidate the five layers of preparation laid on the *sabi*. At this stage the surface of the article presents the appearance of that of a fine rubbed brick.

The next proceeding is to carefully grind down the surface perfectly smooth and level with a white whetstone; and to then apply with the spatula a coat of plain *sesshime-urushi*. This sinks in and hardens the clay preparations during the subsequent enclosure for a day or more in the damp press. The surface now, for the first time, assumes a smooth dark appearance, approaching black. Another coat of *sabi* is now distributed over this surface with the spatula, dried for about two days, and then carefully rubbed down with the whetstone.

What may be considered as the lacquering proper now commences; all the foregoing operations being required in the formation of the basis. The *sabi* having been made perfectly smooth, it is covered with a thin coat of plain *sesshime-urushi*, evenly spread with the spatula. This dries sufficiently in about twelve hours to receive the following coat of *nananuri-urushi*, or middle coating lacquer, applied with a peculiar made brush of human hair (*haké*), a representation of which is given in the adjoining cut. The *haké* is formed of black hair, bound together in a flat shape with some glutinous substance, and tightly enclosed in a thin case of wood, the hair passing from end to end like the lead of a drawing pencil. This arrangement allows a new brush to be cut at will, by removing a short piece of the case, and paring the hair in the angular form shown at A. At B is shown a section of the *haké*, the dark inside being the hair. This description of brush is made in several sizes, ranging from about two inches to one-eighth of an inch wide. The short and stiff nature of the brush enables the workman to lay on the lacquer very thinly and evenly, a matter of the greatest importance in high-class work. When the coat of *sesshime-urushi* has been allowed to dry in the damp press for about thirty hours, it is found to present a hard and glossy black surface. This is carefully rubbed down with *ho-no-ki-sumi*, (magnolia charcoal); and then coated with fine *sesshime-urushi*, laid on very thinly with cotton wool, and almost entirely removed with soft paper. The article is enclosed in the press for twelve hours to dry the coating thoroughly; and on removal the surface appears very smooth and with a semi-gloss.



HAKÉ. The brush of human hair, used for laying on the coatings of lacquer.

The first coating of *rō-urushi*, black lacquer, is now applied with the brush; and the article is set to dry for a period of from twenty-four to thirty hours.

On removal from the press, the surface is smoothed with a piece of close-grained *hiyakujikkō-sumi*, (charcoal made from *Lagerstramia indica*). Another coating of *rō-urushi* is now added, dried, and smoothed as above described; followed by a more careful polishing with finely powdered charcoal, applied with a soft cotton cloth. *Rō-urushi* is again laid on, but this time very thinly with cotton wool, and rubbed off with soft paper. The drying of this film takes about twenty-four hours.

The final polishing processes commence at this stage; and for very high-class work, where great durability is required, the concluding operations are several times repeated. The surface of the lacquer is now brought to a state of great smoothness by being rubbed with a mixture, composed of burnt Inari clay, reduced to an impalpable powder, and calcined deer's horn, applied with a cotton cloth touched with *goma-abura* (oil extracted from *Sesamum orientalis*). A coating of *seshime-urushi* is next applied very thinly with cotton wool; and the article is set to dry in the damp press for twelve hours. The surface now assumes a rich black polish, which is improved by being slightly oiled, and gently rubbed with a cotton cloth and powdered deer's horn ashes. Another coat of *seshime-urushi* is now laid on with cotton wool and rubbed off with soft paper; and the article is again enclosed in the press for twelve hours. On removal, the final polishing is carefully executed with deer's horn ashes, reduced to an impalpable powder, applied with the finger or the fleshy part of the thumb.

Such, then, are the numerous processes deemed necessary by the Japanese lacquer worker, for the production of the highest class plain black lacquer upon wood. As before remarked, the processes are not complicated, but we cannot examine fine specimens of black lacquer, such as may be found on sword-sheaths, without recognising the great care and skill necessary for their successful practice. In all matters requiring patience, loving care, and delicacy of manipulation, we must acknowledge the Japanese lacquer worker as second to no workman the world can produce. From the condensed description above given, it will be found that in the production of an ordinary piece of *honji* no fewer than thirty-three distinct and successive operations have to be followed, from the hollowing away of the woodwork at its joints to the final polishing of the lacquer with the hand and horn ashes. For extraordinary work in which the maximum durability is required the number of distinct operations may extend to between fifty-five and sixty.

The time necessary for the successful completion of a piece of *honji* cannot well be fixed; it naturally depends upon the time of year, the skill and diligence of the workman, and the quality of the several materials used. In the earlier processes the periods of drying may, with advantage, be considerably lengthened; but, as Mr. Quin assures us, the later processes are best carried out when the drying of the successive coats of *seshime-urushi* is not extended beyond the

number of hours given in each case. Calculating roughly, the total (minimum) time occupied in drying in the damp-press amounts to five hundred and thirty-hours, or upwards of twenty-two days. This time is divided into twenty distinct periods. For the highest class *honji*, the total time will reach a far higher figure. The time occupied by the workman in the application of the several materials and coatings of lacquer, and in the grinding and polishing processes which come between the periods of drying, cannot be clearly defined: it will of course depend on his diligence and skill, as well as on the care he chooses to exercise, and the form of the article lacquered.

We advise our readers who may be particularly interested in this beautiful industry to lose no opportunity of examining the series of examples, preserved in the Museum of Economic Botany, at Kew, illustrating all the stages (thirty-three in number) which we have briefly described; a better idea can be thus arrived at than by any written description, however careful it may be.

KATAJI.—Certain of the above described processes are modified or altogether omitted in the manufacture of another high-class black lacquer, termed *kataji*, or "hard basis." The preparation of the wood, the covering of the joints, the priming coats, and the first grinding down after the second application of *sabi*, are carried out in the same manner as for *honji*; but rice flour lacquer is then applied instead of wheaten lacquer, and the hempen cloth spread upon it. After inclosure in the press the surface of the cloth is smoothed down with a knife or plane. On this are laid three coats of *jino-ko*, in this case composed of ten parts of burnt clay, thirteen parts of *seslime-urushi*, and a small quantity of water. Each coating is dried separately in the press. The six succeeding processes, as previously described for *honji*, are now followed in their order, namely, from the coating of *kiri-ko*, laid on the last coating of *jino-ko*, to the third grinding with the white whetstone. The surface of the article, at this stage, is rubbed over with cotton wool saturated with Indian ink, ground with water in the usual way. This gives a rich black surface. A coating of *nakanuri-urushi*, or the middle coating lacquer, is now laid on with the flat brush of human hair, and allowed to dry for about twenty-four hours in the damp press. This is rubbed down with magnolia charcoal; and a coating of *seslime-urushi* applied with old cotton wool and the excess removed with soft paper. After drying for twelve hours, a coating of *rō-urushi* is laid on; dried for twenty-four hours; and then rubbed smooth with a piece of largerstramia charcoal, and afterwards polished with the same material reduced to a fine powder. Another coating of black lacquer is rubbed on with cotton wool and removed with soft paper, and dried for about twenty-four hours. The final polishing processes are now conducted in precisely the same manner as in the manufacture of *honji*, as before described.

HANDANJI.—Still following the classification of Mr. Quin, we now come to another variety of black lacquer of less excellence than either of the preceding classes, but still of good quality, termed *handanji*, or "half-step basis." The processes previous to the application of the hempen cloth are here followed, as in the classes of work already described; but instead of using the cloth, tough paper is usually applied with wheaten lacquer, and rubbed down to a smooth surface. On this paper are laid three coats of *jino-ko*, composed of ten parts of burnt clay, two parts of thin rice starch, and eight parts of *seslime-urushi*, each coating being allowed to dry in the sun instead of in the damp press. The drying appears to be so rapid that, under ordinary circumstances, the three coats can be applied in one day. Upon the final coating of *jino-ko* are then spread two layers of *sabi*, composed of two parts of burnt clay, moistened with water, and about one part of *seslime-urushi*, both of which are dried in the sun. When thoroughly hardened, the surface, produced by the successive layers of preparation, is ground down with a white whetstone; and upon it is spread with a spatula a coating of *seslime-urushi*, and the article is placed in the damp press for about twelve hours. A coating of *nakanuri-urushi* is now laid on with a *haké*, and dried in the press for twenty-four hours. This is ground down with magnolia charcoal, and a thin coating of *seslime-urushi* applied with cotton wool and wiped off with paper, this is dried in the press for about twelve hours; and then a coating of *rō-urushi* is laid on, dried for twenty-four hours, and rubbed smooth and polished with largerstramia charcoal. Now follows the second application of *rō-urushi* and all the final polishing processes as already described in the manufacture of *honji*.

MANZO.—This is a still lower class of black lacquer, introduced by a lacquer worker of the name of MANZO, from whom the variety derives its name. It does not differ much from *handanji*, the only important alteration being in the composition of the *jino-ko*, which in this instance is made of burnt clay mixed with liquid glue until it attains the consistency of ordinary lacquer. Three coats of this preparation are laid on successively and dried in the sun; when perfectly hard, they are ground down with a rough whetstone, and then carefully smoothed with a spatula and a little water. Over this surface is now spread, with a spatula, a coat of *seslime-urushi*, and the article is placed in the damp press for twenty-four hours. This coating hardens the *jino-ko*. Now follows the coating of inferior *sabi*, as described in the processes of *handanji*, with all the subsequent coatings and treatments there adopted.

The four classes of black lacquer working above described are employed for articles of very good quality in which both beauty and durability are required: those which we have now to touch upon are much less laborious and expensive, and

are resorted to in the manufacture of ordinary and common articles for home use and for exportation to Europe and America.

SABI-SABI, or "double sabi."—This variety of lacquer working appears to be confined to Tōkiō, where it is employed for the fabrication of articles of a fair but inexpensive quality. The joints of the woodwork are usually hollowed out, and the whole surface covered with a priming coat of *seslime-urushi*, after which the joints are filled up with *kokuso*, as in the manufacture of *honji*. The *kokuso* is dried in the damp press; and brought to a smooth surface, level with the surrounding woodwork, so as to allow paper to be evenly pasted over the entire surface. Three coats of *sabi* (composed of about twenty parts of burnt Inari clay, and eight parts of *seslime-urushi*) are spread on the paper and dried in the damp press. When quite hard the surface is ground smooth with a white whetstone. On this prepared basis is spread, with cotton wool, a thin coating of *seslime-urushi*; and the article is placed in the damp press for twelve hours. This is followed with a coating of *nakanuri-urushi*, also dried in the damp press. The surface is now rubbed smooth with magnolia charcoal, and again coated with *seslime-urushi*, and dried in the press. The process is completed by coating the article with *jō-hana-urushi*, or common finishing lacquer, and enclosing it in the damp press for about twenty-four hours. On removal, the surface is found to be hard and with a brilliant gloss, requiring no further treatment.

This is unquestionably one of the best of the cheaper processes of lacquer working, and as such it is much used by the Tōkiō manufacturers for boxes, cabinets, rice bowls, and other domestic articles.

KANOJI.—The name of this class of black lacquer, signifying "inferior basis," is taken from the composition used as the basis in preparing the ware. *Kanoji* is a mixture of a white powder (*gofun*), obtained from old shells, calcined and ground, with liquid glue: it closely resembles the composition of whiting and size used by our gilders in preparing grounds for gold leaf. As *kanoji* is never employed for anything but common articles, it is unusual for the workman to do more towards securing the joints of the woodwork than covering them with strips of tough paper, tightly pasted down. When this is done, he covers the surface with *kanoji*, laid on with a spatula in two or three successive coats, and dried in the sun. The surface is then slightly damped with a brush dipped in water, and rubbed smooth with a white whetstone, and finally scraped lightly with a spatula. A coating of lamp-black and glue, or, in the commonest class of work, soot and glue, is now laid on and dried. Upon this is spread a coating of

jō-hana-urushi or *jō-chiu-urushi*, which, dried in the damp press, presents a polished surface, and completes the process. Different makers somewhat vary the process; but it is unnecessary to note the modifications here.

SHIBUJI, or "persimmon juice bases."—This variety of lacquer working is chiefly practised by the Aidzu manufacturers; and articles finished with it are, accordingly, known also by the name of "Aidzu ware."

In this class of manufacture the joints of the woodwork are treated as in the preceding class. When the strips of paper have been applied, the surface of the article is covered with several coats (usually four or five) of *shibuji*, a mixture of persimmon juice and lamp-black, evenly laid on with a flat brush, each successive coat being allowed to become quite dry before another is applied. The last coating is rubbed smooth with *equisetum* (*tokusa*). When the surface has been brought to a satisfactory state, the article is completed with a single coating of *jō-hana-urushi* or *jō-chiu-urushi*, dried in the damp press.

The coatings of *shibuji* having very little body, indications of the grain of the wood are almost invariably to be seen through the lacquer. This gives Aidzu ware a rather common appearance, as if it was only partly finished; but, on the other hand, it is very durable, and owing to the absence of glue in its manufacture, it stands the action of hot water much better than *kanaji*. On this account it is much used for rice bowls and for the small dining-tables or stands (*zen*) which are placed before each person at meals.

KAKI-AWASE.—In this variety we reach the lowest grade of black lacquer-work. Articles to be lacquered first receive a single coat of *seslime-urushi*, with which lamp-black has been incorporated. This coating hardens the surface of the wood and, of course, stains it black. Upon it is laid a single good coat of *jō-hana-urushi* or *jō-chiu-urushi*. For the commonest articles, however, a coating of persimmon juice and lamp-black, or glue and lamp-black, is substituted for the *seslime-urushi* and lamp-black.

This class of ware is chiefly made in Tōkiō, and the articles produced are for the most part rice bowls and common boxes. The ware is also known as *kuro-shunkei*, or "black Shunkei," from the name of its inventor.

Notwithstanding the necessarily condensed and meagre nature of the preceding information, our readers will be able to gather from it a tolerably full and accurate idea of the several processes and methods of manipulation followed in the manufacture of the different classes of black lacquer, from the highest class, *honji*, to the commonest, *kaki-awase*. As will be seen by the descriptions which have now

to be entered on, many of the earlier processes, such as those for preparing the wood and forming the basis, are the same in the three great branches of lacquer-work, namely, black, coloured, and gold.

COLOURED LACQUER.

The processes required for the production of a piece of coloured lacquer of fine quality do not differ generally from those followed in the production of *honji*. The first departure is made when the basis has been completely finished and the time has arrived when the coloured lacquer has to be applied.

Before describing the mode of producing a piece of coloured lacquer, we may give the list of pigments used by the Japanese lacquer workers. The first and most important is vermilion (*shu*), which is employed for all high-class work. In the production of a dull red lacquer, and for inferior articles, red oxide of iron (*benigara*) is used instead of vermilion. Chrome yellow (*kiō*) is employed for the production of yellow lacquer; and in combination with Prussian blue (*bero-ai*) for the different shades of green lacquer. For the skilful manufacture of yellow and light green lacquer, the artists of the district of Aidzu are celebrated. In other districts, and even in Tōkiō, although the same pigments are adopted, the results are darker and generally less satisfactory. Green lacquer is termed *sei-shitsu* or *ao-urushi*. Purple powder (*murasaki-ko*) is composed of white lead and magenta roseine (*tō-beni*).*

In the production of a high-class piece of red lacquer upon wood, the processes are briefly as follows:—The joints are hollowed out, and the article is prime-coated with *sesshime-urushi* and placed in the damp press for about twelve hours. The channels, over the joints, are now filled up with *kokuso*, by means of a spatula, and the article is returned to the damp press for about fifty hours. When thoroughly dry, the *kokuso* is rubbed down and coated with *sabi*, which is afterwards allowed to become dry and hard in the press. After about fourteen hours' enclosure the article is removed, and the *kokuso* and its coating of *sabi* are carefully ground with a whetstone until everything presents a perfectly smooth and

* "In this collection [Mikado's Museum at Kioto] there is a specimen of what is called vellum lacquer—a lacquer having the colour of parchment;—but the art of producing this particular lacquer has long been lost. I also hear [1878] that a violet lacquer was once produced in Japan, but the secret of its manufacture is now unknown. Since my return from Japan I have given much thought to the lacquer industries, and I have been enabled to send out material which has again brought about the production of purple lacquer; thus a lost art has been revived." *Japan: Its Architecture, Art, and Art Manufactures*, by Christopher Dresser, Ph.D., F.L.S., etc. London, 1882. p. 154. The material alluded to we presume to be magenta roseine, now used in the production of the *murasaki-ko* of the lacquer workers.

uniform surface. The article is now covered with *nuno*, or the thin hempen cloth used by the lacquer workers, carefully spread on the preparation of wheaten flour and *seslime-urushi*, called *mugi-urushi*, and dried in the damp press for twenty-four or thirty hours. On removal from the press, the rough portions of the cloth are pared or planed down, and the surface is covered with a thick coating of *sabi*, applied with a spatula. This requires to dry for about twenty-four hours, subsequently receiving three successive coats of *jino-ko*, with intervals of drying between each. Upon the last coat is laid a layer of *kiro-ko*, and the article is placed in the press for twenty-four hours. Another layer of the same composition follows, with a drying period of about three days. The five coatings laid on the *sabi* having become thoroughly consolidated and hard, the entire surface of the article is ground smooth and level with a white whetstone, and then covered with plain *seslime-urushi*, spread with a spatula, which is allowed to sink in and dry for about twenty-four hours. This is followed by a coating of *sabi*, also spread with a spatula, and allowed to dry in the press for twenty-four hours. The surface is now ground with a white whetstone as before, and covered with *seslime-urushi*, applied with a spatula, and dried for about twelve hours in the damp press. A coating of *nakanuri* is now laid on with the *hake*, or flat brush of human hair, and the article is returned to the press for twenty-four hours. After this the surface is ground smooth with magnolia charcoal, subsequently receiving a very thin coating of *seslime-urushi*, applied with old cotton wool, the excess being rubbed off with soft paper. An enclosure in the damp press for about twelve hours completes this stage of the manufacture. All the above operations will be found more fully described in our previous article on the manufacture of *honji*.

The surface is now ready for the reception of the coating of coloured lacquer. The pigment, previously reduced to an impalpable powder, is thoroughly incorporated by grinding with *suki-urushi*, or transparent lacquer—the finest crude sap obtained from old trees; or, for less expensive work, with *shu-urushi*, or vermilion lacquer, so called because it is commonly used with vermilion—a mixture of transparent lacquer with a liberal percentage of *ye* oil. With this latter coloured lacquer the object is evenly coated with a brush and then enclosed in the damp press until it is perfectly dry. On removal it is found to have retained a brilliant polish, which receives no further treatment.

For higher-class work, in which the former coloured lacquer is used, namely, that without the admixture of oil, several additional processes are followed before the surface is considered to have acquired its approved character. When the coating of *suki-urushi* and pigment has been allowed to dry for about thirty hours, it is ground with a piece of largerstramia charcoal. A second coating of the coloured lacquer is now applied, allowed to dry, ground smooth with the charcoal, and finished by being partly polished with finely powdered charcoal applied with a cotton cloth. A thick coating of pure transparent lacquer is now laid on with a

brush, and set to dry in the damp closet for about thirty-six hours. On removal from the press the surface is carefully treated with a very fine powder, composed of burnt Inari clay and calcined deer's horn, applied with a cotton cloth and sesamum oil (*goma-abura*). At this stage the surface presents a fine semi-polish. A thin coating of *Yoshino-urushi*, applied with cotton, is now given, and the article is placed in the press for about fifteen hours. The surface is next polished with deer's horn ashes and a little sesamum oil, a soft pad of cotton cloth being used as a rubber. Another coating of *Yoshino-urushi* follows, laid on with cotton wool and rubbed off with paper, and allowed to dry for twelve or fifteen hours. The surface is now finally polished with calcined deer's horn and a little oil applied with the soft part of the hand, or, in the case of small objects, with the point of the finger.

For inferior work many of the above processes are omitted or modified and inferior lacquers used.

TRANSPARENT LACQUER.

In addition to the opaque black and coloured lacquers previously described, the Japanese use transparent lacquer upon both plain and fancy woods, so that their natural grain may be seen. An article of some richly figured wood, covered with its brilliant coating of lacquer, presents much the same appearance as wood French polished, but is infinitely more durable. Mr. Quin furnishes us with the details of the process for making the lacquer, called by the Japanese, *Ki-jî-ro*, "colour of the grain of wood."

The article to be lacquered is made of some hard fancy wood, and carefully smoothed; it is first coated with *Yoshino-urushi*, or the crude lacquer obtained from the province of Yoshino, spread thinly with a brush. This priming coat imparts a brown tint to the wood. After this is allowed to dry in the damp press for about twelve hours, it is covered with a coating of the best *sabi*, composed of *seshime-urushi* and finely-ground burnt Inari clay, in the proportion of one and a half of the former to two of the latter, with just sufficient water to mix the clay into a paste. The *sabi* is spread with the *hera*, or wooden spatula, and set to dry and harden thoroughly in the damp press for about twenty-four hours. This coating, which is given for the purpose of filling up the exposed cells of the wood, is ground with a green whetstone until none of it remains on the surface of the wood. This grinding also removes the greater portion of the priming lacquer and exposes the grain. A coating of pure *nashiji-urushi*,—the

lacquer commonly applied over metallic powderings, is now laid on with the brush of human hair, and the article is enclosed in the press for twenty-four hours. The surface at this stage presents a rich brown tint, which is reduced by the green whetstone until it is perfectly smooth, and the grain of the wood clearly appears. A second coating of *nashiji-urushi* is laid on with the brush, dried as before, and then carefully ground smooth with a piece of largerstramia charcoal. The surface now assumes a rich transparent tint with the grain of the wood showing through it, and receives another coating of *nashiji-urushi*, applied with old cotton wool, wiped off with soft paper, and dried for twelve hours. The surface receives its preliminary polish with a powder composed of finely ground, burnt Inari clay and calcined deer's horn, applied with a soft cotton cloth and a little sesamum oil, and is afterwards coated with pure *Yoshino-urushi*, applied in the same manner as the preceding coating, and dried for the same length of time. On removal from the press the surface is polished with calcined deer's horn and a little oil. Two other similar coatings and polishings follow, completing the article. The result is a rich polish of great body through which the grain of the wood shows with a lustrous sheen.

In the manufacture of *ki-ji-ro* only the better class of woods is used; and, as the processes are somewhat numerous and require careful manipulation, articles of this class are of necessity expensive. The following variety of transparent lacquer is used for the commoner and ordinary commercial articles.

AKA-SHUNKEI, or red Shunkei, derives its name from its inventor, Shunkei, a lacquer worker of Sakai, in the province of Idzumi, who lived at the end of the fourteenth century.

In the process introduced by this artist the commoner kinds of wood are used, colour being imparted to them by staining. The best ware of this class is now made in Akita, in the province of Dewa.

The article, after being properly smoothed, is coated with a mixture of *Yoshino-urushi* and gamboge, well rubbed into the surface with a hard brush, and placed in the damp press for a day. When perfectly dry, it is coated with *shu-urushi*—the composition of *suki-urushi* and perilla *ocymoides* oil—and allowed to become thoroughly hard in the damp press. This concludes the manufacture, the article appearing with a bright polish, dark brown in colour, and showing the grain of the wood. The colour becomes lighter when the lacquer has been exposed for a few months.

Instead of the first coating of *Yoshino-urushi* and gamboge, liquid glue and gamboge, or persimmon juice and red oxide of iron, are used. Cheap articles of fairly good appearance but of little durability are produced by this modified treatment.

Speaking of *Aka-Shunkei*, Mr. Quin remarks:—"This invention was plentifully

copied by the workmen of Sakai, and met with great favour and a ready sale. About the period extending from A.D. 1624-1644, a *chajin* (a master in the art of preparing powdered tea), named Kanamori Sō-wa, collected a number of workers in this kind of lacquer at Takayama, in the province of Hida, and manufactured quantities of articles for use in tea-drinking. The workmen from Sakai lacquered trays of a colour between yellow and red, which were held in great repute, owing to the fine grain of the wood employed, and the ware obtained the name of *Hida Shunkei*. It rose rapidly in favour, and the quantity made increased yearly. The Hida workmen, moreover, copied a species of lacquer of a light yellow, over fine grained wood, manufactured at Noshiro, in the province of Dewa, and this ware became known as *Hida Noshiro*. Later, as time wore on, this ware, finding wide favour, was imitated in all parts of the country, but none of it could compare in excellence with that made in Hida and at Noshiro. The places where the *Shunkei* ware was imitated are the following:—Shimo Ichi Mura, province of Yamato: Takeda Machi, province of Tajima: Ymada Machi, province of Ise: Shimo Ichi Moto Machi, Awa Mura and Kami Ichi-ge, province of Hitachi: Kami Shibotare Machi, province of Shimotsuke: Odaira and Yuda Machi, province of Iwashiro: Hashiba Machi, province of Mutsu, and at Tōkiō. This ware is still made in all the above named places."

VARIEGATED LACQUER.

Under this head are classed those almost countless varieties of lacquer in which two or more colours are introduced for the purpose of imitating some choice natural material; for producing fanciful variegated grounds; for producing ornamental designs in one or more colours upon black or coloured grounds; for enriching with different colours carved or relieved surfaces of wood or other materials; for producing variegated coloured patterns by grinding, engraving, or carving; and lastly, for rendering figures, animals, landscapes, &c., in one or more coloured lacquers upon grounds of plain or clouded colours.

In the following brief remarks on the above mentioned varieties of lacquer-work, several quotations are given from Mr. Quin's interesting paper, read before the Asiatic Society of Japan.

In any collection of good works of Japanese lacquer one seldom fails to find some specimens of what, for the sake of distinction, may be called imitative lacquer. These, while they are of little interest from an art point of view, display great ingenuity and skill on the part of their fabricators. The processes required to

produce the several effects, such as the delicate gradations of tone presented by the grain of a richly figured wood, or the markings of some choice mineral, are extremely complicated and uncertain in their results. During the progress of his manipulation the artist has to depend entirely upon his ingenuity and experience; for he cannot see, while conducting the earlier stages of his operations, the effect he is producing. The result is only realised after the grinding and polishing processes are completed. Supposing he has set himself the task of imitating a piece of one of the quiet-toned but beautifully figured woods of his country, the artist has to proceed as follows:—The surface of the object has to be brought up to the stage, as described in the preceding notes on Coloured Lacquer, at which it is ready to receive the mixture of transparent lacquer and the pigment; upon this he first spreads a coat of lacquer, coloured to match the chief or ground colour of the natural wood, and allows it to become thoroughly dry in the damp press. On removal, he marks the leading lines of the grain, which is probably of a darker tint than the ground, and then paints with the ground lacquer, as previously used, all the interspaces, graduating the coat in thickness from the edge of the lines inwards. This coating is dried in the press; and the painting with the same lacquer is repeated as often as is necessary in the opinion of the artist to obtain the requisite thickness for the subsequent processes. Of course, it is to be understood that the article has to be enclosed in the damp press after every fresh application of lacquer, although we may not particularly mention the drying in the course of our remarks. When the ground-work has been completed to the satisfaction of the artist, he commences to fill up the graduated channels, left all along the lines originally marked, with lacquers coloured to match the tints of the grain or figuration of the wood. Several tints may probably be required, and as many applications, at least, as were necessary in raising the grounds of the interspaces. Much skill and experience are required in laying on the tinted grain lacquers, for the artist has to foresee the effects every touch will produce under the grinding process. When all the coatings have been laid on and dried into a homogeneous layer, the surface presents an uneven or daubed appearance, which to an inexperienced observer looks very unpromising. This surface is ground down with a piece of Magnolia charcoal, moistened with water, until it has become quite level. Largerstramia charcoal is now substituted for the harder kind previously used; and the grinding operation is continued with great care and attention on the part of the operator. So soon as a slight film of the lacquer has been removed, the different tints forming the ground and markings of the imitation wood begin to show themselves; and, on account of the uneven disposition of the coatings of the different tints used, as above described, the removal of the thickness of an ordinary gold leaf from the surface materially changes its appearance and produces charming gradations of the different colours. The artist watches the grinding with a keen eye until the best result

displays itself, when he at once cleans the article from all traces of charcoal, and proceeds to the final transparent lacquering and polishing processes. These are essentially the same as those required for work in plain coloured lacquer.

For the production of fancy variegated grounds in different colours, a mode similar to that just described is followed, with certain modifications to suit the peculiar effects aimed at by the artist. In Plate I of the present Section, is given an accurate representation of a very remarkable specimen of flat variegated lacquer—the most remarkable and interesting work of its class which has come before our notice. On the complete box there are no fewer than one hundred and two distinctly different patterns, which are, setting aside the few compartments containing designs in polished black on dull black grounds, executed in red, brown, green, yellow and black lacquers, combined in many ingenious ways. All these variegated grounds have been produced by processes of a similar nature to those just described for the production of an imitation of a piece of wood. It is probable, however, that the practice of impressing the surface of the lacquer while still soft may have been resorted to in some of the compartments of this box; the sunk portions being subsequently filled up with lacquers of different colours. The most celebrated ware produced by impressing designs in this manner is that known as *Wakasa nuri*.

“‘WAKASA NURI.’—This ware takes its name from the province of Wakasa, and is made in the town of Obama. The date when this ware was first made is not known with any certainty. It is imitated from a Chinese kind called *Zen-sei*. It was made with a mixture of red, green, blue, yellow, and black lacquers, and presented a cloudy appearance: gold and silver leaf also were used in many cases, forming a floral design, and the ware was considered very handsome. The method adopted in the latter case was as follows:—The article received a coat of lacquer of the colours required, upon which the leaf, flower, or spray of fir tree, etc., desired to be reproduced, was pressed while the lacquer was still fresh. It was then removed, and the lacquered article which had received the impression was set to dry. Afterwards, gold or silver leaf was applied to the whole of the surface so prepared, and another coat of the coloured lacquer given. When dry, the whole was then ground down till the pattern came out. Over this a final coat of transparent lacquer was applied. Good ware is very hard. It was in great request from about 1624, and the demand has been steadily maintained. The articles principally made were cabinets, book-shelves, tables, and *tebako*, boxes for holding papers, etc., and continual improvements and excellence of workmanship were aimed at. Of late years this ware has been imitated in the neighbourhood of Nikkō, but it cannot be compared to the Wakasa lacquer.”

Clouded or mottled coloured lacquers have for a long time been produced in

the district of Tsugaru, and in the neighbourhood of Nikkō. In the latter place trays formed from slices of tree stems, hollowed and covered internally with a mottled lacquer, are common articles of production. Of the lacquer wares of both these districts Mr. Quin makes mention in the following words:—

“‘TSUGARU NURI.’—This ware is manufactured at the town of Hirosaki and the village of Tsukurimichi, in the district of Tsugaru, province of Mutsu. The origin of this ware is unknown; it resembles greatly the Wakasa lacquer in presenting a cloudy and spotted appearance, but in this ware gold and silver are not used. Of late years a kind called *nishiki* lacquer has been made, which consists of painting on the lacquer, birds, grasses, plants, etc., in colours. Numerous articles, long in the possession of, and made expressly for, the Lords of Tsugaru, were beautifully made, and, though it has been imitated in various other localities, the articles produced cannot be compared with this ware for excellence of workmanship, hardness, or durability. The principal articles made are tables, book-shelves, *tebako*, tobacco boxes, writing boxes, etc.

“‘NIKKŌ NURI.’—This ware, somewhat resembling Wakasa lacquer, is made in the neighbourhood of Nikkō. The date of its first being manufactured is unknown, but ware made at the village of Hachi-ishi, in the neighbourhood, was ordered by Iyeyasu about the year 1600. This ware is rough in its finish, but is exceedingly hard, and still maintains a certain popularity.”

YOSHINO NURI.—The ware commonly known by this name, from the fact of its being made in considerable quantities throughout the district of Yoshino, in the province of Yamato, is of black lacquer ornamented with designs painted on in red lacquer. It is a simple class of variegated lacquer, used principally for cups and bowls. A ware of a similar character is made at Tawara, in the district of Toichi, and at Gojō, in the district of Uchi, in the above-named province. We have seen many examples of this variegated lacquer decorated with consummate taste and skill; the contrast of the vermilion and the black being very effective.

Of the numerous varieties of ornamental lacquer, produced by the simple application of one or more colours upon a ground of a different colour, it is of course impossible for us to speak in a short essay like the present. Anyone acquainted with Japanese art can form an idea of the endless variety of effects and treatments even so simple a style of ornamentation would be capable of at the

hands of the ingenious and fanciful artists of the country. Most beautiful results are produced by drawings in outline, by the repetition of geometrical forms, and by the use of diaper patterns executed in fine lines of lacquer of different colours and gold.

Variegated lacquer is also produced by processes of engraving or cutting away the coatings of varnish; and in this branch of the art a great number of varieties of treatment are met with. The following are amongst the most noteworthy styles adopted by the Japanese artists.

GURI.—The ware known by this name is manufactured in the following manner. After the object has been prepared, in the ordinary way for first class work, it is coated with many successive layers of varnish, thickly mixed with different colours, each one being allowed to become thoroughly set before another is added. When the required number of coats has been applied, and the final one brought to a finished surface, the thick body of lacquer is cut with curved and spiral patterns, showing on their inclined sides all the layers as thin lines of colour. On Plate XI., of this Section, is the representation of an *inrō* of *guri* of nineteen layers, laid on in the following order—black, yellow, black, red, black, yellow, black, red, black, green, black, red, black, green, black, yellow, black, red, black. One of the finest pieces of this class of ware, known to us, is a large cabinet, also in the Hart Collection. It is of early seventeenth century workmanship, beautifully mounted with enamels of the same date. There are twelve layers of different colours, the finishing one being vermilion.

TSUISHU NURI.—This is another kind of variegated lacquer produced by carving or cutting into the surface. Of this ware Mr. Quin remarks:—"It is said that in the reign of Go-Tsuchi Mikado (A.D. 1465-1501) a Kiōto workman named Mon-niu first manufactured this kind of ware. It consists of either red or black lacquer laid very thickly on the article, and afterwards, landscapes, flowers, birds, or figures were deeply carved in the lacquer in imitation of Chinese ware. Another ordinary kind consisted of black, red, or green lacquer, on which a floral design was lightly carved, and this was called Kō-kwa Riyoku-yō, 'red flower, green leaf.' There is also a kind of *Tsuishu* and *Tsuikoku* called *Hashika bori*, the only difference being that the engraving is shallower than on the real ware. Between 1596-1615 a workman named Hei-jū-rō excelled so greatly in the manufacture of this style, *i.e.*, *Tsuishu*, that he took the name of Tsui-shu Hei-jū-rō. He was employed by Iye-yasu, and his descendants followed his trade. Between the years 1716 and 1736 this ware was greatly in fashion. At Kiōto there was a workman named Tsui-shu-ya Ji-rō-ye-mon who is said to have produced much finer ware than his ancestor Mon-

niu. At the present day the Kiōto, Nagasaki, and Tôkiō workmen manufacture an imitation of this ware."

ZŌ-KOKU NURI.—According to Mr. Quin, "this lacquer derives its name from a man called Tamakaji Zō-koku, who resided at Takamatsu, in the province of Sanuki, about 1624. This man, having learnt the Chinese method of lacquering, invented several improvements. The method used in making this ware was to lacquer over bamboo baskets (a wooden foundation was also sometimes used) either with red or black lacquer, and upon this surface floral designs were most minutely carved in the lacquer. Over this a coating of either the same or different coloured lacquer was applied, and then ground down and polished in such a manner that the carved pattern could be seen through. This was looked upon as very excellent workmanship. This man's younger brother and one of his sons attained great excellence in this ware, which is still made by the descendants of the originator, and the manufacture of which is confined to the one family."

"'CHINKIN BORI.'—In this kind of ware the pattern was very lightly engraved on the lacquer, and powdered gold was afterwards worked into the lines. The date when this kind was commenced is unknown, but it is said to have been imitated from the Chinese. During the first half of the 18th century a Nagasaki workman, whose name has not been preserved, excelled in this kind of work, and towards its end a Tôkiō workman named Ninomiya Tō-tei manufactured this ware. Tō-tei carved the designs on the lacquer with rats' teeth instead of knives, and the articles made by him are still preserved and greatly prized. The design of one piece of lacquer made by him, representing a peony in full bloom growing beside a rock on which a peacock is standing, is greatly admired as a beautiful piece of workmanship. In the year 1868 the manufacture of this ware was started at Wajima, and it has of late been made in several other localities."

Under the head of variegated lacquer must be included all those kinds which have been produced by the ingenuity of the Japanese lacquer workers in imitation of natural productions, notably metals and alloys. Some of the latter, representing cast and wrought iron and many varieties of bronze, from a newly finished surface to that covered with its rich green patina of age, are marvels of skill and ingenuity. The special finishing processes by which so many different effects are arrived at in these lacquer imitations are far too complex to admit of anything approaching a clear or full description here. They do not appear to be of a settled character, for each artist adopts his own methods according to his own ideas and aims. As examples of such

imitative lacquer we may mention the large vase of the incrustated panel represented on Plate II. of Section V. It cleverly imitates cast iron enriched with a *hōwō* and man playing a *cheng* executed in gold, copper, and different colours of bronze. The panel illustrated on Plate V. of Section V. is produced in imitation of a plate of hammered bronze or copper of considerable age. On the work represented on Plate VIII. of the same Section, the bell carried by BEN-KEI is in imitation of old bronze covered with its green patina. These are simple examples out of thousands which might be brought forward. In the production of such curiosities of lacquer, the earlier processes, required in the preparation of the basis, are the same as those already described in connexion with plain lacquer: it is only in the few finishing coats that the artist displays his individual skill and ingenuity.

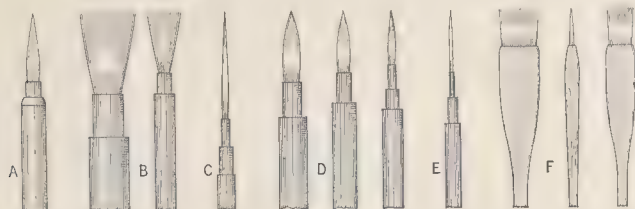
It may be argued that all such imitations as we have above alluded to are examples of misapplied ingenuity and patience; and that they are not sound art. To some extent this may be granted, without, however, doing the Japanese artists a great injustice; but it must be borne in mind that the imitations are not intended to deceive the eye, any more than the skilful representations of marble from the masterly brush of Alma-Tadema are expected to do. We do not compare these two classes of imitative art; perhaps, for the credit of European art, it is desirable not to do so.

GOLD LACQUER.

Of all the varieties of high class lacquer produced by the skilful artists of Japan, those in which the precious metals play a prominent part are unquestionably the most beautiful and interesting. It is impossible to examine a fine specimen of old gold lacquer without a feeling of astonishment at the marvellous dexterity, patience, and taste it displays: some, indeed, are so perfect in every way as to raise the question in one's mind—Can these be the works of the unaided hand of man? There is no exaggeration in such remarks as these; for it can be safely said, even with such essays of patience and skill as the illuminations of the "Book of Kells" before one's mind's eye, that in the whole range of ornamental art there is nothing which surpasses the finest examples of old gold lacquer.

In the preparation of articles for the reception of ornamentation in the precious metals, the numerous processes already described in connexion with the plain black and coloured lacquers have to be followed, from the guarding of the joints of the woodwork to the stage when the finishing coats of varnish have to be applied. At this advanced stage the operations peculiar to the art of working in the metallic dusts, scales, foils, etc., commence.

BRUSHES AND IMPLEMENTS.—The complete equipment of the artist embraces numerous articles; and these may be briefly spoken of before we proceed to describe the processes of applying the metallic preparations. Certain of the implements already alluded to are of course required by the artist, namely, *hera* of *hi-no-ki*, of which several sizes are used, all smaller than those employed in the preparation of the basis (see page 11), and *haké*, or flat spreading brushes of human hair (see page 12); two sizes of these are provided. Several shapes and sizes of brushes are used, as shown in the cut below, made of hair from different animals; the following are their names and particulars of their formation. A—*Mensō*, brushes of deer's hair, used for spreading preparations of a thick and stiff nature, and for laying on the *sabi* at the edges of raised work. B—*Kébbō*, brushes of different sizes, made from the longer hairs from the body of a horse, employed for distributing fine gold dust on freshly applied lacquer and for removing the surplus particles. Large *kébbō* are used for general



BRUSHES USED FOR GOLD LACQUER, FULL SIZE.

dusting purposes, having hair about three inches long. Four sizes are usually provided. C—*U-no-ke-usaji-fude*, long and fine brushes made of white hare's hair, used for drawing outlines of a bold character, and for filling in designs with prepared lacquers. Two sizes, called *dai* (large) and *chō* (small) are provided. The larger size is shown in the cut. D—*U-no-ke-ji-nuri-fude*, also of white hare's hair, employed for grounding in. Five sizes are provided, called *i-chō* (number one), *i-chō-han* (number one and a half), *ni-chō* (number two), *ni-chō-han* (number two and a half), and *san-chō* (number three). E—*Neji-fude*, brushes made of carefully selected hair from the backs of ship rats. These are the finest brushes provided for the lacquer worker, and are used for tracing outlines and for drawing the extremely delicate lines to be seen on choice specimens of lacquer. F—*U-no-ke-haké*, small flat brushes made of white hare's hair, used for laying on thin coats of lacquer on small surfaces. Two sizes are provided. A fine brush (*neji-fude*) attached to a primitive sort of compass, made of bamboo, is employed for drawing circular lines. The instrument so fitted is called *bun-mawashi*. For his convenience in working with the several brushes the artist provides a *fude-kake*, or brush rest, a triangular rod of wood notched along each edge. A sort of spatula formed of tortoise-shell or ivory, called *fude-arai*, or

brush cleaner, is used for removing the lacquer from the brushes, with the aid of *goma-abura* (*sesamum orientalis* oil). All brushes must be carefully cleaned immediately after being used with lacquer or compounds into which it enters.

Several other implements besides those connected with brushes are required by the worker in gold lacquer. First in importance are the *tsutsu*, or tubes, covered at one end with silk gauze, used for dusting the different metallic powders and scales on the surface of the lacquer. Six sizes of these are commonly provided, three of bamboo and three of swan and crane quills. Full size drawings of these are given in the adjoining cut. The tubes of bamboo are thinned down so as to be extremely light, cut, at an acute angle, at both ends, one of which is covered with the gauze, tightly stretched, as shown. The coarsest gauze has about three meshes to one-eighth of an inch, while the finest is a tightly woven silk of extreme thinness. For applying the larger metallic scales or the small squares of gold or mother-of-pearl, used in certain classes of work, slender and sharply pointed sticks of bamboo or other light wood are provided: these are called *hira-me-fude*. The scales or squares are lifted one by one on the point of the *hira-me-fude* and deposited in their places in the work. A small spoon of thin brass, called *saji*, is used for putting the metallic powders into the *tsutsu*. Spatulas of Chinese



TSUTSU, DUSTING TUBES.

"island whalebone," known as *kujira-bera*, are required for mixing the materials, and for transferring traced outlines to the surface of lacquered articles. For burnishing or polishing minute crevices or indentations a fish's tooth, mounted in a slender handle of bamboo, is used. In addition to the above implements, the lacquer artist provides himself with small oval palettes of horn or tortoise-shell, fastened on the left thumb by a loop of string, called *tsume-ban*; a *take-ban*, or small curved board of bamboo, about 5 inches by 1½ inches, for cutting the small squares of gold and silver foils upon; a small hexagonal piece of polished white shell, used for smoothing paper; and boxes of different sizes for holding the brushes and other implements, the numerous metallic powders, and such materials as require to be protected from dust.

METALS AND ALLOYS.—Besides the different kinds of lacquer and the materials and preparations already described in the processes of making black and coloured lacquer ware, the artist in gold lacquer requires a large assortment of metallic powders, scales, foils, and compounds. These we shall now enumerate, adopting the classification given by Mr. Quin.

In the preparation of the metallic dusts or powders, known as *yasuri-ko* or *yasuri-fun*, namely, filings or file-powders, *yaki-kin* (pure gold), *koban-kin* (an alloy of ten parts of gold and two and six-tenths of silver), and *gin* (pure silver), are used.

There are twelve varieties or sizes of dust obtained from each of the above, to which the following distinctive names are given by the lacquer worker. Each variety differs slightly in its degree of fineness.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Ara-tsune</i> (coarsest grain). | 7. <i>Komaka-mc-mi-jin</i> . |
| 2. <i>Chiu-tsune</i> . | 8. <i>Aragoku</i> . |
| 3. <i>Komaka-mc-tsune</i> . | 9. <i>Goku-gashira</i> . |
| 4. <i>Mi-jin-tsune</i> . | 10. <i>Goku-mi-jin</i> . |
| 5. <i>Hanako</i> . | 11. <i>Komaka-mc-goku-mi-jin</i> . |
| 6. <i>Mi-jin</i> . | 12. <i>Usuji</i> (finest grain). |

There is a dust, practically impalpable, called *keshi-fun*, made from pure gold and *koban* only. The metal is beaten into leaf, such as that in ordinary use, and then ground in liquid glue until a powder is produced. The glue is subsequently washed away by water, and the dust collected and dried. This is the finest dust used by the lacquer worker.

In addition to the above powders there are two series of scale dusts, known by the general names of *hira-me* and *nashiji*. Eight varieties of *hira-me*, or "flat eye," differing slightly in size, are prepared from gold, *koban-kin*, and silver. Their names are as follows.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Dai-dai-ichi</i> (largest scales). | 5. <i>Ai-no-san</i> . |
| 2. <i>Dai-ichi</i> . | 6. <i>Tsune-no-san</i> . |
| 3. <i>Dai-ni</i> . | 7. <i>Shō-san</i> . |
| 4. <i>Dai-san</i> . | 8. <i>Saki</i> (smallest scales). |

All these varieties are made from filings rolled out flat upon a polished plate of iron.

The thin flakes, known as *nashiji*, are made from pure gold, *koban-kin*, *jiki-ban* (ten parts of gold and three and one-tenth of silver), *nam-ban* (ten parts of gold and three and six-tenths of silver), and pure silver. Seven degrees of fineness in each of the above metals and alloys are used by the lacquer worker in producing that species of glistening surface which bears a resemblance to the ripe rind of a pear (*nashi*), from which the flakes of metal derive their general name, *nashiji*. The following are the distinctive names of the varieties.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Dai-ichi</i> (largest flakes). | 5. <i>Tsune-no-san</i> . |
| 2. <i>Dai-ni</i> . | 6. <i>Shō-san</i> . |
| 3. <i>Dai-san</i> . | 7. <i>Saki</i> (smallest flakes). |
| 4. <i>Ai-no-san</i> . | |

A coarser kind, called *Giyōbu-nashiji*, is made from an alloy of thirty-four parts gold and thirty-five parts silver. This is seldom used, as it requires seven or eight coats of lacquer to be applied over it before it is covered or filled up sufficiently to stand the polishing operations. *Nashiji* is also made from tin, but it is never used by the worker in gold lacquer.

Foils made of gold, *koban*, and silver, called *kana-gai*, are used for the preparation of the small squares which are to be seen, inlaid side by side, in the finer pieces of raised gold lacquer. Four thicknesses are made from each of the above; the thickest is called *hon-neji*; then follow in order *chiu-neji*, *usushu*, and *kime-tsuke*. The last and finest kind is frequently applied to the surface of the lacquer without any covering of varnish: in this form it is perishable and apt to blister and peel off.

METALLIC COMPOUNDS, &c.—By the admixture of pigments and other materials with the finer qualities of metallic powders, the artist obtains several useful and effective compounds. These he adopts for shading and for imparting subtle tones of colour to leaves, flowers, and other details executed in raised gold. The principal compounds are the following.

Shaku-dō-fun.—A mixture of seven parts of pure gold dust and three parts of fine copper dust. This produces a deep metallic effect approaching pure copper in tint.

Aka-fun.—A semi-metallic red powder, produced by mixing vermilion, in different proportions, with pure gold, *koban*, or silver dust. *Aka-fun* is largely used for shading leaves when autumnal tints are aimed at; and frequently appears in other details with pleasing effect.

Kuri-iro-fun.—A chestnut-coloured powder, composed of one part of gold dust and one part of a mixture of vermilion and finely powdered camellia charcoal. This is also used for shading and for producing the effect of bronze.

Kuro-fun.—"Black powder" prepared by mixing gold, *koban*, or silver dust with powdered camellia charcoal.

Nedzumi-iro-fun.—"Rat-coloured powder," a mixture of one part silver dust and one part of powdered camellia charcoal with a trace of vermilion added.

The proportions above given are not fixed; each artist modifies them according to the effects he wishes to produce. Several different shades are to be seen on large and fine specimens of gold lacquer.

In addition to metallic and semi-metallic powders, minute scales of choice green and crimson mother-of-pearl are often used as a surface enrichment; in many instances with far more beautiful results than anything possible with gold or silver similarly treated. The scales of shell are sometimes so small as to be dusted on by the *tsutsu*,

while at other times they are so large as to be applied singly with the *hira-me-fude*. The finer green shell scale powder is called *awogai-mi-jin*.

In the collection made by Mr. Quin, now deposited in the Museum of Economic Botany, at Kew, there is a panel on which one hundred and ten specimens are given, showing all the varieties of *yasuri-ko*, *hira-me*, *nashiji*, and the coloured compounds above described: these have been laid on the panel by the hand of a Japanese expert.

We have now to briefly describe the processes followed in the production of works decorated with designs in gold, silver, and the different metallic alloys and compounds. All the varieties of gold lacquer may be said to group themselves under three distinctive heads; namely, *togi-dashi*, in which the metallic patterns are brought out by grinding and polishing; *hira-makiye*, in which the designs are kept perfectly flat and do not show themselves above the general surface of the work; and *taka-makiye*, in which the ornamentation is in various degrees of relief, inlaid, and incrustated, according to the taste of the artist.

TOGI-DASHI.—In the preparation of articles to be decorated by this mode of treatment, the processes followed in the manufacture of *honji*, from the first to the fifteenth inclusive, are observed. This is the stage described on page 12, immediately preceding the first coating of *rō-urushi*, or black lacquer.

The artist is furnished with a drawing of the design required, to enable him to prepare his transfer sketch. This he does in the following manner. Taking a piece of thin tough paper on which a wash of a size made of glue and alum has been laid to prevent absorption, he carefully draws the design, the exact dimensions required, on one side with a brush and ink; then with a fine *neji-fude*, or rat's hair brush, charged with lacquer, he goes over all the ink lines, on the reverse side of the paper. The lacquer for this purpose is prepared so as not to dry, by being heated over glowing charcoal. When the tracing is finished, it is laid, with the lacquer lined side downwards, on the article to be gilded, and gently rubbed with a *kujira-bera*, or whalebone spatula, similar in shape to the *hera* illustrated on page 11. On the removal of the tracing the outlines are found to be transferred to the surface of the article; a little ball of cotton wool, dipped in finely powdered white whetstone, is then lightly applied to bring out the transfer clearly. When the entire design has been treated in this manner, the artist proceeds with the gilding process. Those portions of the design which have to appear brightest in the finished work have to be slightly raised above those which are intended to be of deeper tone: the artist accordingly lays these on with stiff lacquer and sprinkles them over with gold dust from a *tsutsu*. The medium dusts, such as *mi-jin*, *komaka-me-mi-jin*, and *aragoku*, are those best suited for this purpose. When the lacquer is fully charged with the dust and the surplus is removed the article is placed in the damp

press for about thirty hours. On removal, the artist carefully goes over all the remaining transferred outlines with a *neji-fude* charged with *rō-se-urushi* (described on page 8), and then fills in all surfaces to be gilded with the same lacquer, applied with a *u-no-ke-usaji-fude* of convenient size. While this coat is in its unset state it is dusted over with gold *hanako*, from a bamboo *tsutsu* of the smaller size, until the surface is evenly covered. The article is then returned to the damp press for a period of twenty-four hours. On removal, the gilded portions are recoated with *rō-se-urushi*, thinly applied, and the article is placed in the press for about twelve hours or until the coat has become hard. At this stage the design is in flat gold, with the details, first painted on with stiff lacquer, showing slightly in relief, for they have received two coatings and have been twice dusted with gold. The artist now covers the entire surface of the article with a good coat of *rō-urushi*, prepared as described on page 7, and sets it to dry in the press for three or four days. The surface of this coat is then ground down with *ho-no-ki-sumi* (magnolia charcoal), until the gold design underneath begins to show itself. The surface has to be carefully watched and constantly dusted during this grinding, to prevent the gold being accidentally reached and injured by the charcoal. So soon as the grinding has reached the desired stage, another coating of *rō-urushi* is applied, and the article is placed in the drying press for about forty hours. The grinding process is repeated and continued until the design shows its details with the different degrees of clearness required. The surface is finally finished by the polishing processes already described, in connexion with *honji*, on page 13.

In the collection preserved in the Museum at Kew there are three interesting specimens of *togi-dashi*, showing the principal stages of its manufacture.

No. 126.*—Subject, the branch of the lacquer tree. 1st and 2nd stages, showing the transferred outline and the first drawing in with lacquer. 3rd stage, the same application powdered with gold dust. 4th stage, the design coated with *rō-se-urushi* and covered with gold dust. 5th stage, first coating of *rō-urushi*. 6th stage, the same ground down with magnolia charcoal. 7th stage, from the second coating of *rō-urushi* to the final polishing.

No. 127.—Subject, water and clouds. 1st to 3rd stages, transfer, veining, and powdering with *yasuri-ko* and *hira-me*. 4th stage, application of the coating of *rō-se-urushi*, dusted with gold. 5th stage, first coating of *rō-urushi*. 6th stage, the same roughly ground down with magnolia charcoal. 7th stage, the finished surface showing the desired effect.

No. 128.—Subject, branch of rose, executed on a panel of *tagaya-san*, a native wood resembling "rosewood" in appearance. 1st stage, the transferred outline. 2nd stage, the first application of lacquer on the portions to be in slight relief. 3rd stage, the same powdered with gold dust. 4th stage, coating of *rō-se-urushi*, powdered

* The numbers here given are those attached to the objects at Kew.

with gold. 5th stage, coating of *suki-urushi*, or transparent lacquer. 6th stage, the same ground down with magnolia charcoal. 7th stage, second coating of *suki-urushi*. 8th stage, second grinding with charcoal. 9th stage, thin coating of *suki-urushi*, applied with cotton wool. 10th stage, the same polished with *to-no-ko* (finely powdered burnt clay) and *tsuno-ko* (deer's horn calcined and ground). 11th stage, a thin coating of *yoshino-urushi*. 12th stage, the same polished with *tsuno-ko*. 13th stage, second thin coating of *yoshino-urushi*. 14th stage, final polishing with *tsuno-ko*. It will be observed that, in this case, the process of manufacture is somewhat modified; *suki-urushi*, or transparent lacquer, being applied instead of the usual *rō-urushi*, or black lacquer. This is done so that the grain of the wood panel may be seen.

HIRA-MAKIYE.—This is the name given to all gold lacquer which presents a flat or even surface. In the manufacture of flat gold lacquer the Japanese artists display a wonderful delicacy and tenderness of feeling and treatment. Some specimens we have met with are amongst the finest essays of the art of lacquer working. Probably the most beautiful class of flat gold lacquer is that in which all the details and transparent effects are produced by graduated or softened-off dustings of gold, *koban*, or silver. This class is often met with alone; but the most charming results are obtained by its association with raised gold and incrustated lacquer.

The processes peculiar to *hira-makiye* are simple and few in number; this is accounted for by the fact that they invariably begin when the groundwork has passed through all the stages requisite for a highly finished work in plain black or coloured lacquer, as already described on pages 9 to 14 and 18 to 20.

An article is taken, generally of black, although vermilion lacquer is sometimes preferred, and the outline of the required design is transferred to it from paper, in the manner spoken of in connexion with the manufacture of *togi-dashi*. The outline is gone carefully over with a *neji-fude*, and the spaces grounded in with a *u-no-ke-usaji-fude*, charged with *shita-maki-urushi* (described on page 8). On this is immediately dusted from a *kēbō*, or horse's hair dusting brush, gold powder; the 8th degree of fineness, called *aragoku*, being commonly used. The dusting is continued until the lacquer will absorb no more of the gold. The article is then enclosed in the damp press for twenty-four hours. On its removal the ornamented surface is thinly coated with *suki-urushi* or *yoshino-urushi*, and the article returned to the press for about thirty-six hours. If at this stage it is found to be perfectly dry and hard, the surface is carefully ground with camellia charcoal, and afterwards polished with *tsuno-ko* and a little oil, applied with the point of the finger. Any veining or other minute details are now drawn in with a *neji-fude*, charged with *ke-uchi-urushi* (inside line lacquer), and dusted with gold powder, *goku-mi-jin*, from a small *kēbō*. After drying in the press for twelve or fourteen hours, the entire surface of the article is coated with *yoshino-urushi*, applied with cotton wool and rubbed with paper until very little

remains. Another twelve hours' enclosure in the press renders the surface ready for the final polishing with *tsuno-ko* and oil, applied with the finger as before. If the design requires any black lines or spots, as the marking of hair or eyes or any decided shading, they are added last of all with a brush charged with a mixture of *kuma-urushi*, *jō-hana-urushi*, and *yuyen-sumi* (lamp-black).

In the manufacture of the very beautiful and delicate flat gold lacquer, alluded to above, in which graduated and transparent effects are produced by thin dustings of gold, *koban*, and silver powders, the Japanese artist displays a skill and refinement little short of marvellous. All the effects are produced by repeated dustings from *tsutsu* or small *kébō* upon very thin coatings of lacquer. The great skill is displayed in so distributing the powders as to secure the exact proportions on the different parts of the surface. Upon this the production and effect of the design depends; and the slightest mistake is fatal. In the finest examples, however, it is impossible to detect a mistake or anything approaching one.

Regarding the manufacture of an inferior kind of *hira-makiye*, Mr. Quin supplies the following particulars:—"The tracing is accomplished in the same manner, but *shita-maki nobe-urushi* (branch lacquer, red oxide of iron, and camphor) is used for filling in the pattern with a hare's hair brush. The article is then set to dry in the press for ten or twenty minutes, during which time the lacquer has begun to harden, and less gold will adhere. Then gold dust (*goku-mi-jin*) is applied with cotton wool thinly, and the article is set to dry for twenty-four hours. The whole surface is then smeared over with *yoshino-nobe-urushi* (Yoshino lacquer and camphor) on a piece of cotton wool, and wiped off again with soft paper. The reason is that it is less trouble to smear over the whole surface thinly, and it is, moreover, not necessary to give a thick coat of lacquer to the decorated part, as the gold dust has been very thinly applied. It is set to dry for twelve hours and ground smooth with camellia charcoal and polished with powdered whetstone and oil on the point of the finger. The fine lines are then drawn with a rat's hair brush charged with *shita-maki* lacquer, and sprinkled with gold dust (*goku-mi-jin*) from a brush (*kébō*), and the article set to dry for twelve hours. The whole is again smeared with *yoshino-nobe* lacquer and carefully wiped off again with paper, and set to dry twelve hours. The article is then polished with powdered whetstone and oil on the point of the finger; and a second application of *yoshino-nobe* lacquer with a little water, wiped off with soft paper, set to dry for twelve hours, and finally polished off with deer's horn ashes and oil on the finger, finishes the operation." Of the still commoner kinds of flat gold lacquer it is unnecessary to speak. The chief aim of their makers is to expend as little gold as possible and to economise time and labour.

TAKA-MAKIYE.—Under this name are included all the varieties of raised gold lacquer, produced by dusting, inlaying or imbedding, and incrusting with gold, *koban*,

and silver. It is only possible, in an essay like the present, to give a general review of the processes followed in manufacturing *taka-makiye* in what may be called its normal variety: of the countless modifications and individual treatments practised by the Japanese artists it is beyond our power to speak.

As in the manufacture of *hira-makiye*, the groundwork has to be entirely finished before the ornamentation is commenced. In *taka-makiye* different grounds may be used according to the fancy of the artist. He may adopt a *nashiji* ground or one of plain black, red, green, or other coloured lacquer, or of a lacquer imitating some natural material; or he may select an object of plain wood, ivory, tortoiseshell, metal, &c., on which to display his skill.

For our present purpose we will suppose that he has selected a groundwork of black lacquer; and that it comes into his hands after having been finished according to the processes described under *honji*.

He first prepares the design on paper, lines it with the roasted lacquer, and transfers it to the surface of the article, as already described in connexion with the manufacture of *togi-dashi*. When the design is completely transferred and brought out clearly, the artist outlines and grounds in the portions to be raised with *shita-maki-urushi*, or under coating lacquer, and immediately dusts over the design finely powdered camellia charcoal, and places the article in the damp press for twelve hours. With reference to this stage of the process Mr. Quin remarks:—"If the outside is to be higher than the inside, a broad margin is painted and covered with the charcoal powder, leaving the centre untouched, and *vice versa*; if the centre is to be higher a faint line only is painted outside, and the inside is given a thickish coating which is sprinkled with the charcoal dust." This primary coating and dusting is given for the purpose of forming a hard basis for the reception of the subsequent raising coats, that is, to secure their perfect adhesion to the surface of the original groundwork. When the article is removed from the damp press it is dusted and washed so as to rid it entirely of detached particles of charcoal and to clean out the fine lines of the design. A little *yoshino-nobe-urushi*, or Yoshino spreading lacquer, is now applied to the design with a ball of cotton wool and carefully wiped off with soft paper, and the article is returned to the drying press for twelve hours. On removal, the portions in process of being raised are carefully ground with magnolia charcoal, and a second coating of *yoshino-nobe-urushi* is applied with cotton wool, rubbed off with paper, and dried for twelve hours.

For designs in slight relief, a coating of *taka-maki-urushi*, or raising lacquer, is now laid on with extreme care; for the outer edges a fine rat's hair brush is used, while for the interior surfaces a hare's hair brush is employed. When this coating has been laid on all portions of the design, accurately graduated according to the artist's intention, the article is laid in the damp press for a length of time sufficient to thoroughly dry it. It takes from forty to sixty hours according to circumstances. When removed from the press the raised portions are again

ground with magnolia charcoal, and then brought almost to a polished condition with finely powdered camellia charcoal applied by a soft cotton cloth. For high-class work a further polishing is carried out with oil and whetstone reduced to an impalpable powder, also applied with a cotton rag. *Seshime-urushi* is rubbed over the polished designs with cotton wool and cleared off with soft paper, and dried in the press for about twelve hours. The raised portions which have now assumed the forms desired by the artist, and have become very hard, are polished with deer's horn ashes and *sesamum orientalis* oil applied by the point of the finger. At this point the gilding operations commence.

For designs in high relief, several coats of *sabi* are laid on after the second application of *yoshino-nobe-urushi*; the article being set to dry for about twelve hours after each coating. Great skill is required in distributing the *sabi*, a brush of deer's hair being used for the edges and thinner portions, and a spatula for those parts intended to be highly raised. When sufficient relief has been obtained, the designs are ground in the most careful manner with a fine whetstone, so as to present all the details aimed at in the finished article. When this grinding process has been completed to the artist's satisfaction, he gives the surface a coating of *yoshino-nobe-urushi*, applied with cotton wool and rubbed off with paper, and places the article to dry for twelve hours. Then follow the coating of *taka-maki-urushi* and all the subsequent processes, already described for designs in slight relief, until the gilding stage is reached.

The artist now selects the different kinds of gold dust required to produce the effects he aims at in the work; and if he intends to bring out the high lights of his picture or design by small squares of gold, he prepares them from foils of the requisite thickness in the following manner. Taking a small sheet of gold, say about the thickness of an ordinary piece of note paper, measuring an inch in length by half an inch in width, he spreads it on a curved piece of black bamboo and covers it tightly with a slip of tough semi-transparent paper, tied down with a string so as to prevent any slipping of the gold in the process of cutting. When all is made secure, he cuts the gold foil with a knife into a series of ribbons exactly the width he requires the squares to be. In doing so he also cuts through the paper. As about a sixteenth of an inch of one end of the gold foil has been bent over the edge of the bamboo board, the knife does not quite detach the ribbons; this is requisite to facilitate their subsequent division into squares. The paper is now removed and the gold foil is held lengthwise on the curved bamboo with the fingers of the left hand, while, with a knife, the ribbons are cross-cut into a number of perfect squares. These are placed in a small black lacquered tray and are ready for use.

As these squares of gold, called by the lacquer workers *kiri-kane*, or cut metal, have to be applied before the *yasuri-fun*, or file-powders, it is desirable that we should describe the mode of their application first. After the portions of the design which is to receive the *kiri-kane* has been thinly coated with *rō-se-urushi*, the

artist lifts the squares, one by one, on the point of the slender pointed stick of bamboo, called the *hira-me-fude*, and carefully deposits them, side by side, at greater or less distances apart as his taste may direct. After all have been laid a piece of soft bibulous paper is carefully pressed over the portions operated upon, for the purpose of removing the exposed *rō-se-urushi*. The article is now set to dry in the damp press for about twelve hours. On removal the portions are further relieved from traces of the *rō-se-urushi* by being rubbed over with the finger and finely powdered camellia charcoal. If any parts of the design are to be enriched with *hira-me* or scales of shell they are now applied with the pointed stick in the manner just described. The portions to be gilded with the gold dusts are now coated with *shita-maki-urushi*, or under coating lacquer, and the powders are spread thickly over them from a *tsutsu* or *kébō* as the case may require. For high-class work this gilding may be repeated. An enclosure of twelve hours in the damp press is required after each operation. From this point the article is treated in a way similar to that already mentioned in connexion with *hira-makiye*, beginning after the process of dusting the gold on the coating of *shita-maki-urushi*.

In the finest class of raised gold lacquer, there is a great deal of after work, in which all the minute details of the design are brought up from the general masses, by delicate brush work and repeated dustings of the finer gold powders: but it is impossible for us to describe the progress of this tedious after work without confusing our subject and wearying our readers.

For *taka-makiye* on plain wood, Mr. Quin informs us that "the whole surface is covered with tin-foil, stuck on with rice paste, to keep the wood quite clean, and then the place only where the pattern is to come is cut out. In making all high-class lacquer the edges of every article are pasted over with tin-foil to prevent their being rubbed or injured by the workman, and the same is done over each portion as it is finished." We cannot wonder that precautions of this sort are necessary when we realise the time required to complete a fine piece of work. Mr. Quin, writing in 1880, says:—"Watanabe Tō-sen is at present employed by a company in Tōkiō called the Sei-kō-sha, and is at work on a tobacco box for the Empress. The pattern is landscape and water, with cranes in the foreground, and embraces the various styles, viz., *Togi-dashi*, *Hira-makiye*, and *Taka-makiye*. It has been six months on hand and will probably be completed in a couple of months. The estimated cost is about three hundred *yen*. The above facts will give a slight idea of the time it takes to complete a good piece of lacquer ware; the dimensions of this box are about ten inches long by six deep and eight inches high. The great drawback to making lacquer ware of a high order in the present day consists in the fact that the workmen cannot afford the time necessary, but are obliged to work as rapidly as possible. In former days time was no object." The time mentioned here does not seem at all out of the way; many important specimens of elaborately ornamented gold lacquer are known to have occupied years in fabrication.

LACQUERING ON METALLIC GROUNDS.—The earlier processes required for lacquering on metal are the only ones which differ materially from those followed in lacquering upon wood. The difficulty of getting the lacquer to firmly adhere to the polished and non-absorbent surface compels the lacquer worker to resort to the application of intense heat. When the first coat of crude sap is laid on the article is held over a clear red charcoal fire until the varnish becomes a hard crust and ceases to give forth any fumes. The crust thus formed is so firmly attached to the metal as to prevent subsequent coats peeling off. It is smoothed with *largerstramia* charcoal, recoated with crude sap, and again submitted to the action of the fire. For good work this process is repeated several times, or until the artist is satisfied that a reliable groundwork or basis has been secured. At this stage the processes required for the production of black or coloured lacquer, *togi-dashi*, *hira-makiye*, *taka-makiye*, or any other variety of lacquer commence and are followed as already described for wood grounds.

NASHIJI.—This class of lacquer is much used by the workers in gold lacquer, for to their art it strictly belongs. High-class *nashiji* is made with flakes of the precious metals and their alloys, but the inferior ware now made for the western market is almost invariably made with tin flakes. This imitation ware is turned out by the plain lacquer workers. The term *nashiji* signifies literally "pear basis"; and is given to the lacquer because its peculiar colour and glistening surface produce an effect resembling, to some extent, the rind of a certain native pear in its ripest condition. This variety of lacquer has been called in Europe "aventurine lacquer" from its likeness to the natural substance of that name, and to the variety of Venetian glass also called aventurine. An accurate representation of high-class *nashiji* is given in Plate III. of this Section. It forms the ground between the two groups of books on the large box. It is a body of transparent yellow varnish in which glistening flakes of gold appear to be suspended.

The manner in which the *nashiji* flakes are made has been already described under the head of Metals and Alloys; and the names of all the sizes commonly used are likewise given.

In the manufacture of *nashiji* lacquer, the same number of the preparatory *honji* processes as required for *togi-dashi* (see page 33) have to be completed before those peculiar to the present method of treatment commence.

The article at this preparatory stage receives a coating of *rō-se-urushi*; and gold flakes of the approved size are dusted evenly over it while wet from a bamboo *tsutsu*, or dusting tube. Considerable skill is here required to prevent anything approaching a patchy or clouded effect through an unequal distribution of the flakes. The article is now placed in the damp press for forty-eight hours; and in its dry state is liberally coated with *nashiji-urushi*, pure transparent lacquer obtained from old trees, and

returned to the damp press for three or four days, or for such a length of time as is necessary to thoroughly dry the coating. On removal it is ground with magnolia charcoal and water, thoroughly washed, and again coated with *nashiji-urushi*. After drying for about two days the surface is carefully ground with the charcoal until it becomes perfectly even and smooth. A third coating of *nashiji-urushi* is now lightly applied with cotton wool and wiped off with soft paper, and the article is placed in the damp press for about twenty-four hours. When taken out it is carefully polished with a powder composed of fine *to-no-ko* and ground camellia charcoal and a little oil. Then a coating of *Yoshino-urushi* is given with cotton wool and wiped off with paper, dried for twelve hours, and subsequently polished with deer's horn ashes and oil. Two further applications of *Yoshino-urushi* are given, followed by dryings and polishings as just described. These complete the article and bring out the full effect of the *nashiji*.

Nashiji is made with silver flakes, in precisely the same manner as when gold flakes are used.

Of the manufacture of imitation or spurious *nashiji*, in which tin flakes are used under a coating of transparent yellow stained lacquer, it is unnecessary for us to speak here.

INCRUSTED AND IMBEDDED LACQUER.

The manufacture of fine pieces of lacquer in the ornamentation of which incrustated and imbedded-work plays an important part has, in all the great periods of the industry, occupied the attention of the Japanese artists. But as we treat the subject of Incrustated-work at some length in the following Section, it is only necessary to say a few words on its more direct application to lacquer here.

The materials most commonly used for the incrustated and imbedded portions of the ornamentations are thick metallic foils, mother-of-pearl, tortoise shell, and ivory. In addition to these, objects carefully modelled in faience, carved in pearl, coral, wood, and ivory, or chased in gold, silver, bronze, *shakudo*, *shibu-ichi*, and other alloys, have frequently been attached to the surface of objects of lacquer, forming beautiful adjuncts to their designs.

The greatest artist in what may be considered legitimate incrustated and imbedded lacquer was KŌRIN, born at Kiōto in the year 1661. He was a painter and designer of singular power and originality as well as a consummate artist in lacquer working. Speaking of him, M. Louis Gonse truthfully remarks:—"L'époque de Genrokou (fin du XVII^e siècle et commencement du XVIII^e) est illustrée par deux maîtres qui

comptent parmi les plus originaux et les plus éminents du Japon : j'ai nommé Kōrin et Ritsouō. L'un et l'autre ont employé et associé des méthodes si personnelles qu'on peut dire qu'ils ont révolutionné l'art des laques. J'ai dit au chapitre de la Peinture que Kōrin était le plus grand des impressionnistes, le plus génial des dessinateurs japonais. Il a transporté dans le décor et l'exécution des laques tout son esprit d'initiative, toute l'indépendance de sa fantaisie. Il a fait craquer le vieux moule dans lequel végétaient les ateliers de Kioto soumis à l'influence presque exclusive de l'école de Tosa. L'action de Kōrin sur les arts décoratifs a été toute-puissante. Par son frère Kenzan, qui était son docile imitateur, il affranchit les écoles céramiques de Kioto de tout asservissement aux formules chinoises et acheva l'œuvre d'émancipation inaugurée par Ninsei; par ses œuvres de laque, où il se révéla praticien de premier ordre, il força l'admiration de ceux de ses concitoyens qui étaient rebelles aux étrangetés de son style. On dit encore aujourd'hui 'l'or de Kōrin,' tant le ton de ses laques d'or était particulier. C'est un ton sourd, puissant, égal, un peu mat, d'une chaleur concentrée et pleine de vibrations. Ses œuvres semblent taillées dans un bloc d'or. Le vernis coule de son pinceau comme une matière fluide et grasse. Son décor est traité par grandes masses, avec des partis pris sommaires d'une audace extraordinaire. Il tire des incrustations de nacre, d'argent, de plomb, et d'étain des effets saisissants. Avec l'étain et le plomb employés comme note grise, en surfaces minces ou en reliefs épais, il obtient des fuites de plans, des profondeurs dont il avait, il est vrai, trouvé des exemples chez les artistes anciens, mais que lui seul a amenés à cette perfection."

The works in lacquer by KōRIN are extremely difficult to describe, and their correct illustration is practically impossible. On Plate XI., of this Section, is given a heliogravure of a remarkable piece, in the possession of Mr. Ernest Hart, which conveys some idea of the boldness and originality of this master's style. We have other equally characteristic examples before us while we write which could not be done justice to by any known system of printing, plain or coloured. One is a writing case, the lid of which presents the figure of a Dai-miō upon horseback. The horse is graphically portrayed by bold outlines of thick sheet lead, cut into form and incrustated on the black lacquer ground: a few touches of flat gold, representing the trappings, complete the picture of the animal. The face of the Dai-miō is in flat mother-of-pearl, with the features and hair indicated by fine engraved lines, filled in with black lacquer. The entire costume of the figure is in thick sheet lead, roughly cut and scored to indicate the forms and folds of the different garments, and enriched with patterns in gold lacquer. The hill on which the horse is walking is in flat gold of great body—the veritable "Kōrin gold." This fearless association of so brilliant a material as polished mother-of-pearl with so dull and humble a material as unpolished lead separates the masterpieces of KōRIN from the works of all the other artists in lacquer.

Genuine works by KōRIN are now very scarce and difficult to procure. The

finest collection in England and probably in Europe is that in the possession of Mr. Ernest Hart, of London; it comprises remarkably fine examples of the rich raised gold and the incrustated lacquer of the master.

Of another great artist in incrustated and imbedded lacquer, M. Gonse speaks thus:—"Ritsouô, de Yédo, est moins un laqueur qu'un incrustateur, non pas qu'il ne se soit montré à l'occasion un laqueur très habile, mais parce que ce sont ses incrustations sur laque et ses grandes pièces décoratives qui l'ont rendu célèbre parmi les amateurs des deux mondes et qui ont jeté un lustre tout particulier sur la capitale des Shigouns. Le moindre japonisant connaît les travaux de Ritsouô. Ils ont un caractère tellement tranché, si complètement japonais; les procédés d'exécution sont si originaux, l'invention en est si personnelle et si franche, qu'il ne faut pas être grand clerc en matière d'art pour en être frappé. Il a fait des panneaux d'applique, des boîtes à gâteaux, des cabinets, des nécessaires à l'usage des femmes, des cantines, des plateaux, des étagères, des boîtes de pharmacie; son ingéniosité s'est exercée sur les formes les plus diverses, son goût a relevé les objets destinés aux usages les plus vulgaires. Ritsouô est un indépendant dans toute la force du terme; il n'est d'aucune école, il n'appartient à aucun genre. Entre tous les modes d'incrustations ce sont les incrustations de céramique sur laque qu'il a traitées de préférence. Dans ce genre de travaux il a créé des merveilles dont aucun artiste n'a donné l'équivalent ni avant ni après lui. Ritsouô ne se répète jamais. Chaque objet sorti de ses mains est une œuvre complète, marquée au coin d'une recherche spéciale, toujours intéressante. Son style a quelque chose d'étrange, d'imprévu et de trouvé. Ses procédés forcent l'admiration par la difficulté vaincue, ils enchantent le regard par une austérité et une simplicité de coloris pleines de saveur."

Several other artists have been celebrated for their incrustated lacquer works, but it is unnecessary for us to speak of them in this purely practical essay.

The material most commonly found imbedded in fine pieces of lacquer is richly tinted mother-of-pearl. This is first reduced to thin plates, then cut into the forms required, and cemented with lacquer on the ground of the object while it is only partly finished. The surrounding ground is then gradually brought up to the level of the pearl, and the whole is finally ground and polished. When this is done the operations of raised gilding, as described for *take-makiye*, are commenced. A fine specimen of lacquer with imbedded pearl and raised gold ornamentation is illustrated on Plate XI., Fig. 2.

In an incrustated work, the lacquer ground is first finished after the *honji* method, and the outlines of the design transferred to it from paper in the manner already described under *togi-dashi*. The spaces to be incrustated are then carefully sunk through the lacquer into the woodwork to a depth sufficient to give a secure hold to the applied pieces. The several incrustations having been previously formed to the required shapes and finished by any system of engraving, carving, or chasing, are cemented into the depressions and carefully edged with lacquer. All decoration in

raised gold is finished before the incrustations are applied; but any surface enrichment in gold or coloured lacquer on the surface of the incrustations is usually executed after they are fixed.

We have by no means covered the entire field of Japanese lacquer working by our somewhat lengthy notes; but enough has been said to acquaint our readers with all the leading facts and details connected with this remarkable art industry.



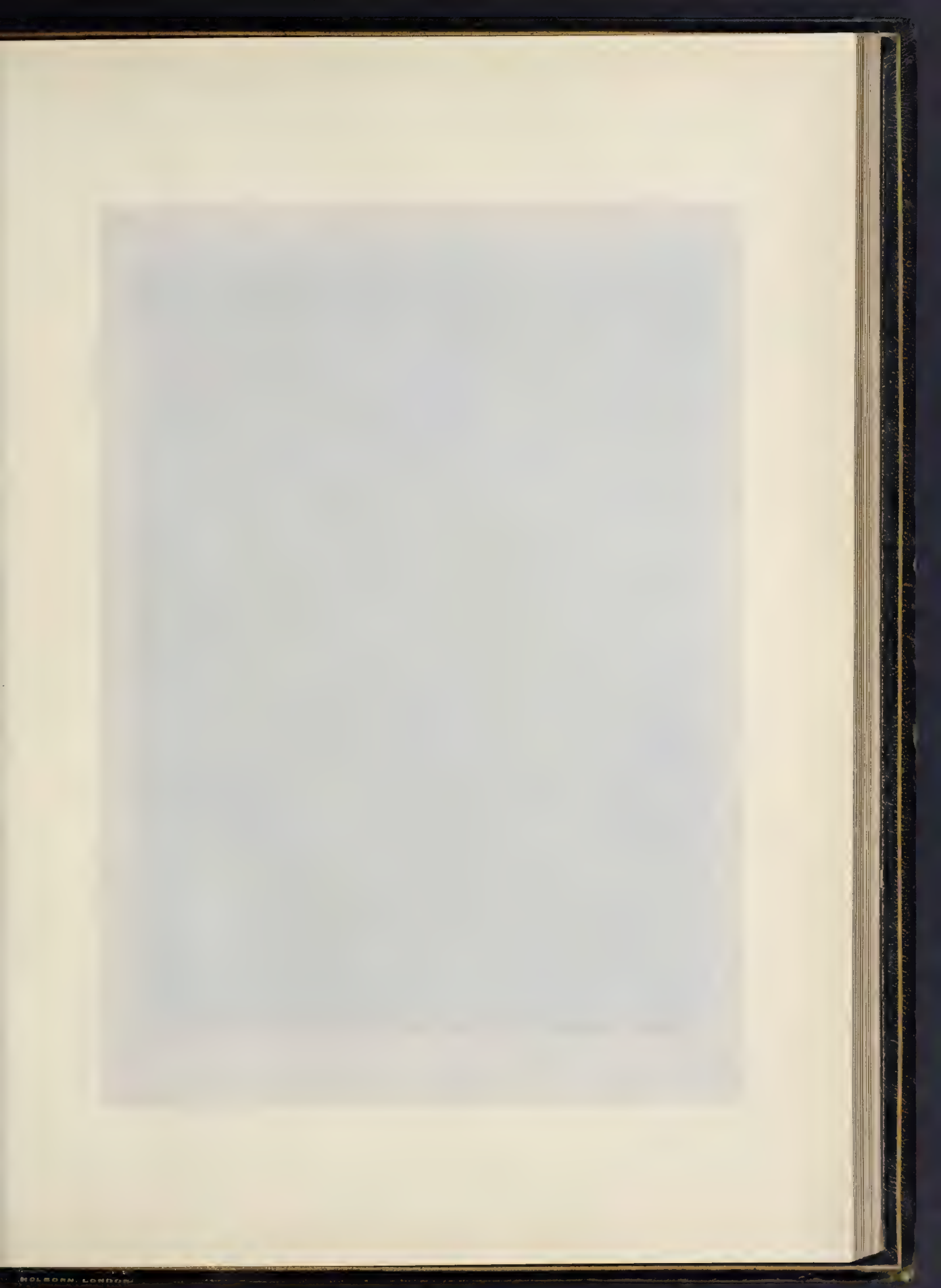
DESIGN FOR LACQUER BY OGATA KORIN.

FROM THE KORIN SHINSEI HAKU. 1797

Errata.

Page 5, line 50, for Quinn, read Qun.

Page 12, line 31, for *sesteme-no ushi*, read *nakanu-i no ushi*.





SECTION FOURTH.—PLATE I.

LACQUER.



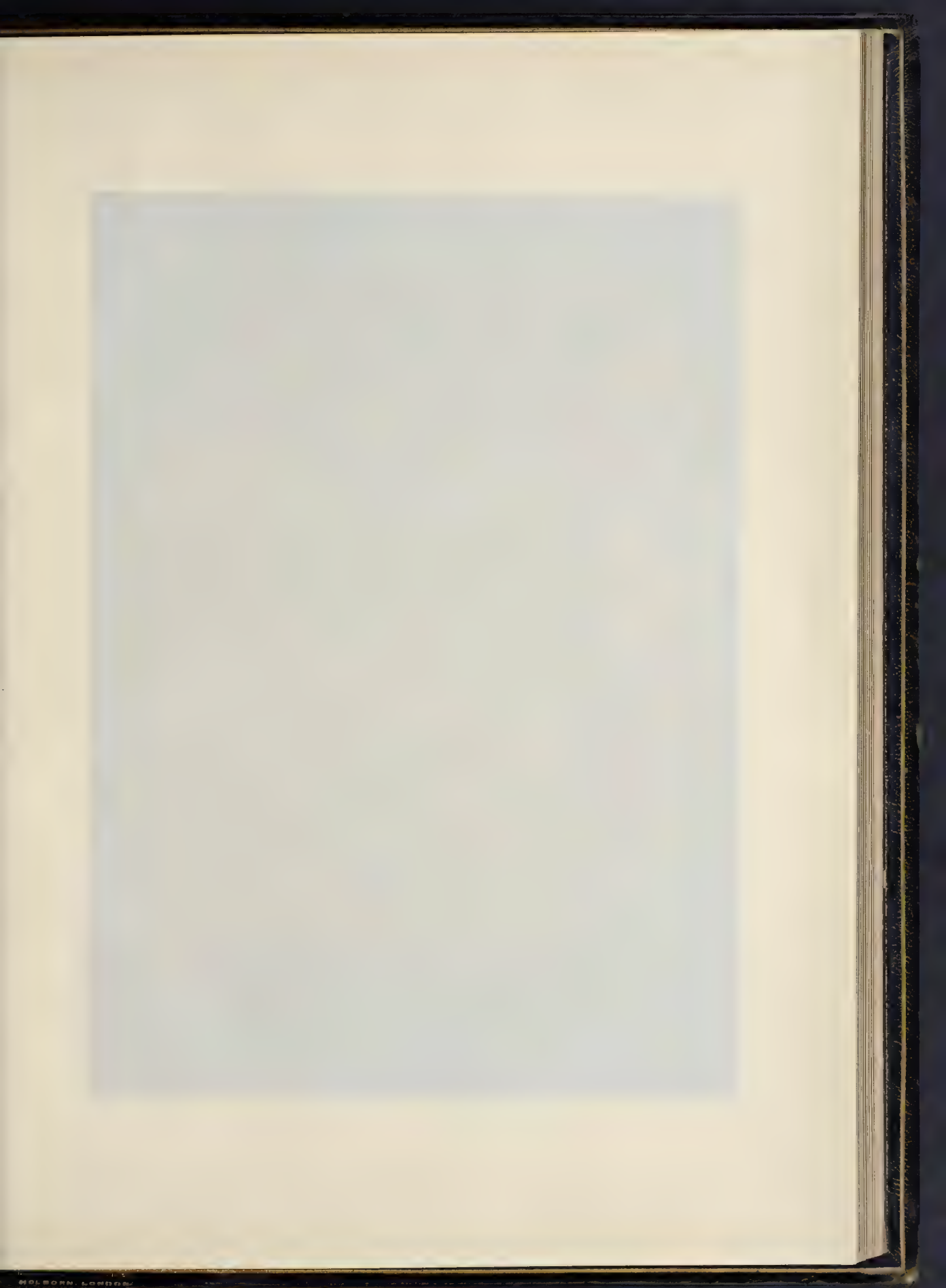
VARIETY is charming; and in no class of art work is this saying more thoroughly exemplified than in the Ornamental Art of the Japanese. The Lacquer Box, the lid of which forms the subject of the present Plate, is a very noteworthy illustration of the extent to which Japanese artists carry their love for variety: not only is every compartment of the design of a different shape, but there are no fewer than one hundred and two distinctly different patterns used for the grounds of the compartments. This is certainly an extreme instance, for on no single example of Japanese art work with which we are acquainted is there anything approaching such a display of variety to be found.

As a specimen of lacquer this Box is altogether remarkable, both on account of the ingenuity evinced in its general treatment and the range of its colours and their combinations. It has evidently been a study-piece on which the lacquer worker has expended his inventive powers so far as flat surface enrichment, in coloured lacquers only, is concerned. Had the precious metals and mother-of-pearl been introduced, the variety would not have been so noteworthy, but these rich materials have been studiously avoided by the artist; and their absence cannot be regretted where everything is so quiet and refined.

The tedious processes followed by the lacquer worker, in producing such flat patterns as cover this Box, have already been described in our brief essay on the manufacture of lacquer, and need not be touched on here. The knowledge of these processes, however, only tends to increase our wonder at the absolutely perfect manner in which the lacquer ornamentation of this Box has been conceived and carried out. The chromolithographic artist has succeeded, to a marvellous extent, in accurately reproducing on the Plate the forty-four different patterns which

the upper surface of the lid presents. The Box is of old lacquer, made during the early part of the last century. Its dimensions are as follows:—Length $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches, width $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and depth 6 inches.

In the possession of the AUTHOR.





1. 1. 1. 1. 1.

2. 2. 2. 2. 2.

3. 3. 3. 3. 3.

4. 4. 4. 4. 4.

SECTION FOURTH.—PLATE II.

LACQUER.

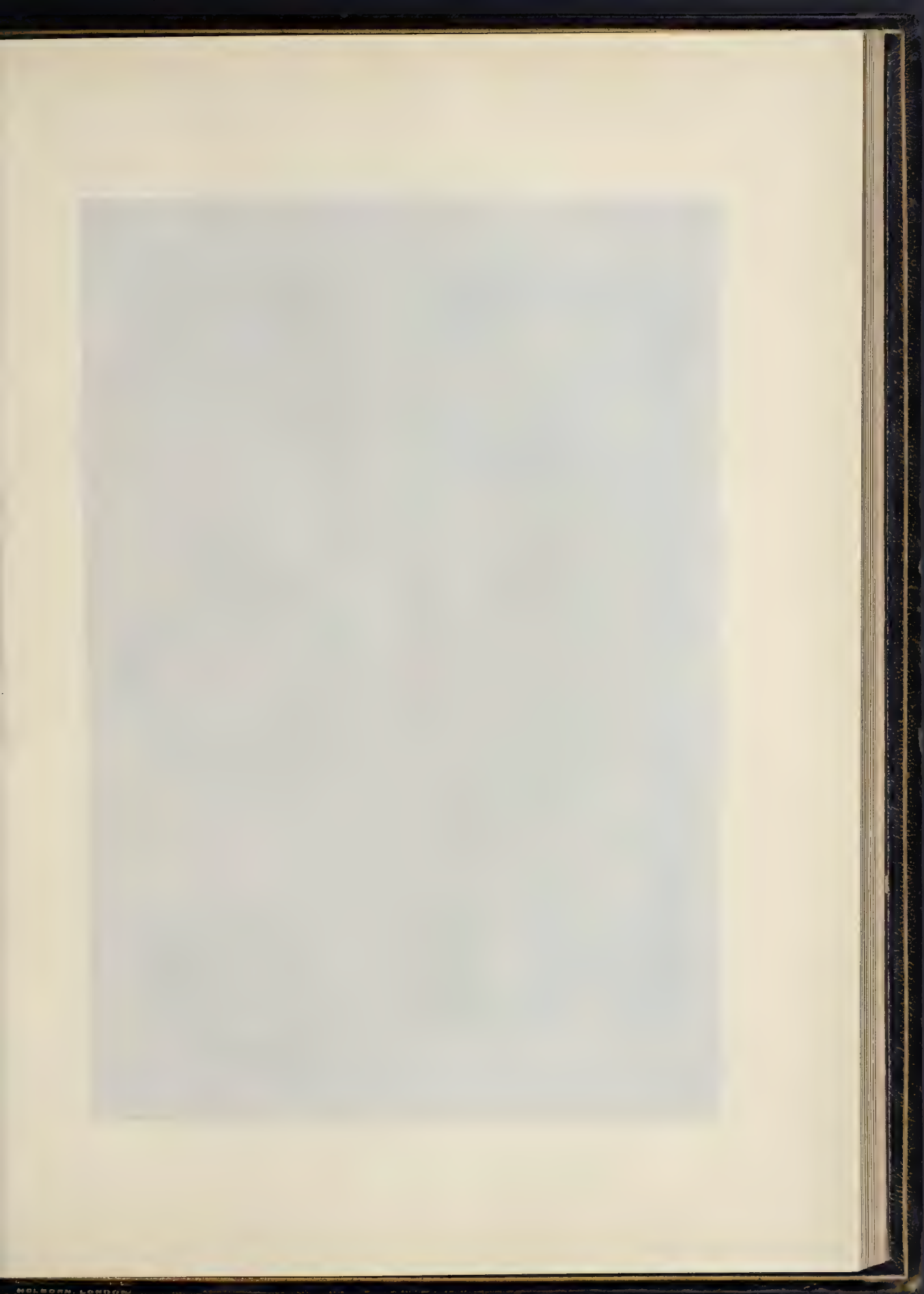


THE Box represented on this Plate is a most interesting and beautiful specimen of Lacquer-work, presenting two widely different styles of manufacture. The general form is peculiarly Japanese, appearing as if composed of two boxes of similar shape, one partially overlapping, or, as it were, absorbing the other. Compound shapes of this class are greatly affected by Japanese artists. The major division of the box is strictly Japanese in treatment: the ground is of rich powdered gold, covered with a highly-polished, transparent lacquer, and decorated with water-lines, two boat-like objects, and delicately drawn masses of grass and flowers, produced in gold of three different shades. The under portions of the boats and certain parts of the vegetation are executed in a dull metallic pigment resembling oxidised silver, probably the material called by the Japanese lacquer workers *nedzumi-iro-fun* (rat-colour grey), composed of equal parts of silver and camellia charcoal, with a trace of vermillion. This grey colour material enhances the value of the gold by contrast. Red is skilfully applied in some of the plants. The whole of this portion of the box is of the most perfect finish, indicating the work to be of considerable age—probably not less than a hundred years.

The minor portion is completely different in design and style of manufacture. Its general treatment has evidently been suggested by the Chinese lacquer-work, commonly designated "Pekin lac," but has the usual evidences of superiority met with in Japanese adaptations of Chinese art. The ground is most beautifully carved in a minute hexagonal diaper and covered with a tawny-yellow lacquer; the stems, leaves, and red flowers are carved in relief, thickly lacquered dark green and deep-toned vermillion, and engraved. The light-coloured flowers are of carved and engraved ivory, toned by a light buff stain, and the buds are of delicately-tinted

mother-of-pearl, also carved and engraved. The flowers are peonies and chrysanthemums. It is very rare to find specimens of lacquer which display the variety shown by this beautiful Box. Fine old gold lacquer is seldom associated with any other variety which contrasts with it in a marked degree. The lid of the Box is very accurately rendered on the plate, full size. The depth of the Box is about $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches. The sides are ornamented with designs in continuation of those on the lid.

In the possession of JAMES S. OGILVIE, Esq., of Broughty Ferry.





SECTION FOURTH.—PLATE III.

LACQUER.



OTWITHSTANDING the great difficulties which surround the successful delineation of elaborate and minutely wrought specimens of Japanese Lacquer, it is one of our chief aims in the present Work to place before all art lovers a series of accurate representations, in gold, silver and colours, of choice examples of the most beautiful styles of treatment met with in this marvellous

branch of art industry.

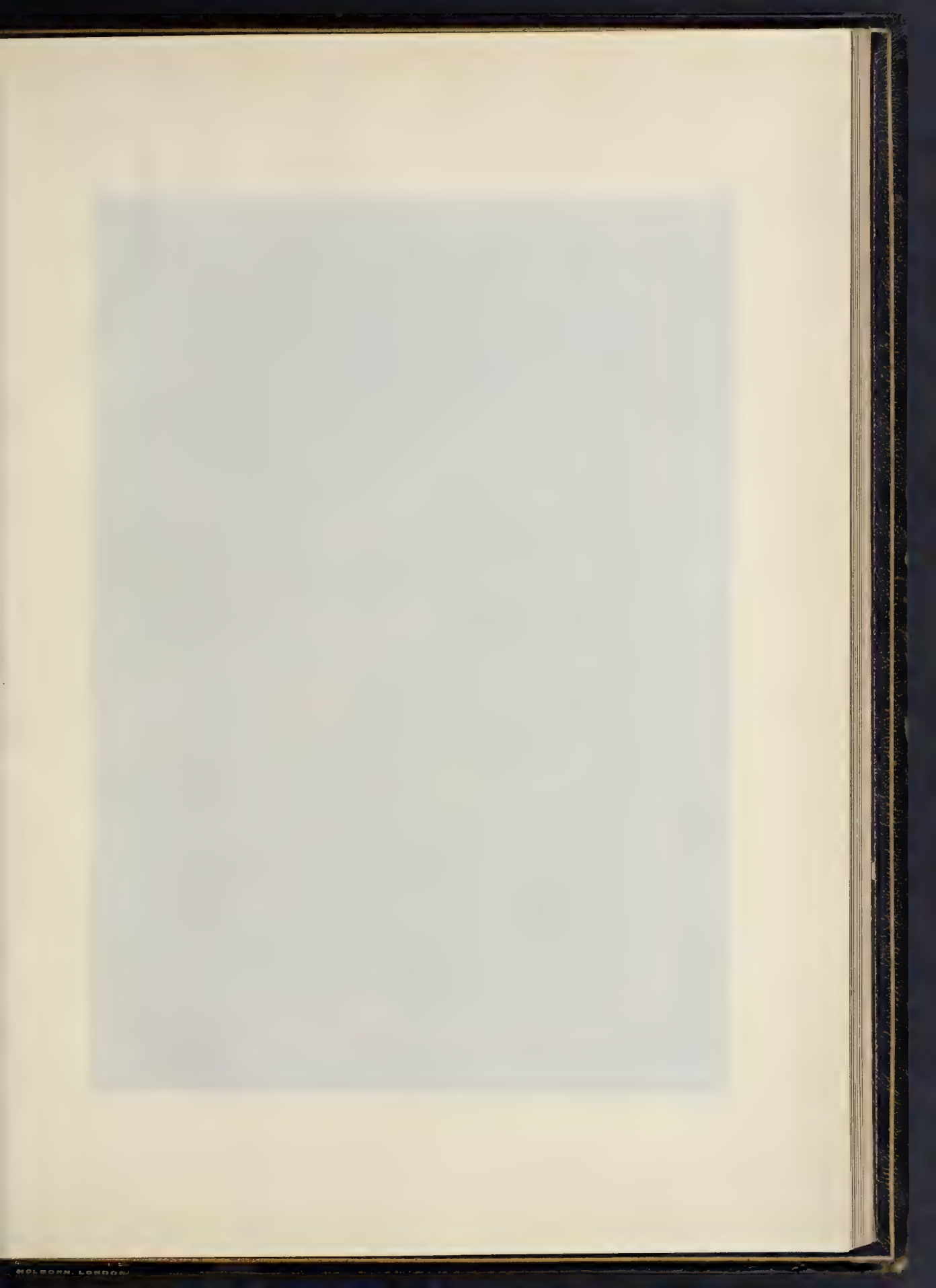
The four Boxes, given full size in the present Plate, are remarkable alike for the richness and variety of their ornamentation and the many styles of treatment they display. The largest piece may be said to represent in itself all the styles held most in repute amongst the Japanese in the finest periods of the art. It is a box used by the Japanese aristocracy for holding letters in course of delivery, of a very brilliant *nashiji*, or aventurine, lacquer, almost entirely covered with ornamentation consisting of books with rich covers. These have given the artist full scope for a display of his ingenuity in design, and his skill in manipulation. On the lid, the upper surface of which is shown in the Plate, eight books are disposed in an irregular, overlapping fashion, and on the sides of the box itself are portions of seven books. The most striking of the books on the lid is that shown spread open, and decorated with branches of the *ume*. The ground is of flat gold, the *ume* having its stems and leaves in raised *koban* and gold, and its flowers in incusted tin, a metal generally preferred by the lacquer artists to silver, on account of its very slight liability to tarnish. The back and ends of the leaves, and the oblong label, are also in incusted tin, brightly polished. The other open book, at the opposite end of the lid, is much more delicately and elaborately decorated. The ground is of brown lacquer powdered with very fine

koban dust; just dimly appearing, and as if buried in this ground, are purple and crimson leaves, while on the surface are wrought leaves in raised gold, *koban* and coloured lacquer. The label is in mat gold, and the two circular medallions adjoining it are in incrustated tin and raised gold lacquer. On the other side of this book are numerous leaves in flat and raised gold and coloured lacquers, and an object resembling a cap of state, executed in raised gold lacquer, inlaid *koban*, and opalescent mother-of-pearl. Over this book is another with a gold ground, decorated with leaves and flowers of the *kiri*. The small portion of the book seen under the edges of the leaves of both the open books is executed in flat black and coloured lacquer, dusted in an ornamental pattern with silver. The book shown overlapping the end of the lid, towards the right hand, is of black and gold clouded lacquer, ornamented with gold hanging blinds, *ume* flowers executed in gold and mother-of-pearl, and a spray of fir tree in raised gold. The adjoining book is of dark green lacquer, slightly dusted with *koban*, and ornamented with wistaria in gold, *koban*, and silver. The other treatments call for no special notice. This beautiful box was evidently made in the latter part of the last century.

The box in the form of two fans, which occupies the central position in the upper portion of the Plate, is a charming specimen of old lacquer, decorated in the most minute and careful manner, with a landscape on the upper fan, and waves and spray on the under one. The grounds are of black lacquer dusted and inlaid with gold; the landscape is in raised and inlaid gold lacquer, and the waves and spray are in raised and silver-dusted lacquer. This box is a work of the middle of the seventeenth century.

The remaining two boxes are very choice specimens of raised gold lacquer upon black grounds richly powdered with gold. The effective way in which the deep gold and the lighter coloured *koban* are introduced in the decoration of these boxes is worthy of notice. The sides of the boxes are in gold, with diaper-work and scroll-work ornamentation in raised gold. Both these pieces date from about the beginning of the last century.

In the possession of JAMES F. LOW, ESQ., of Monifieth, Dundee.







SECTION FOURTH.—PLATE IV.

LACQUER.



MORE characteristic specimen of Japanese ornamental art than the beautiful Box which forms the subject of the present Plate, it would be difficult to imagine. We have classed it among our specimens of Lacquer, notwithstanding that it also presents an important decoration in Incrusted-work.

The lid of the box, the portion represented in the Plate, consists of a panel of the finest black lacquer, framed with richly-wrought raised gold, gold dusted, and aventurine lacquers, displayed on portions of the medallions which cover the entire sides and ends of the box, and fold over the edges of the lid in the fashion so frequently met with in works of Japanese art. On the panel is a spray of *ume*, executed in raised brown and gold lacquer, with flowers and buds in opalescent mother-of-pearl. The bird which rests on this spray is carefully modelled in faience, resembling that of Satsuma, but doubtless of Kiôto manufacture, enamelled in quiet tones of green, yellow and purple-brown.

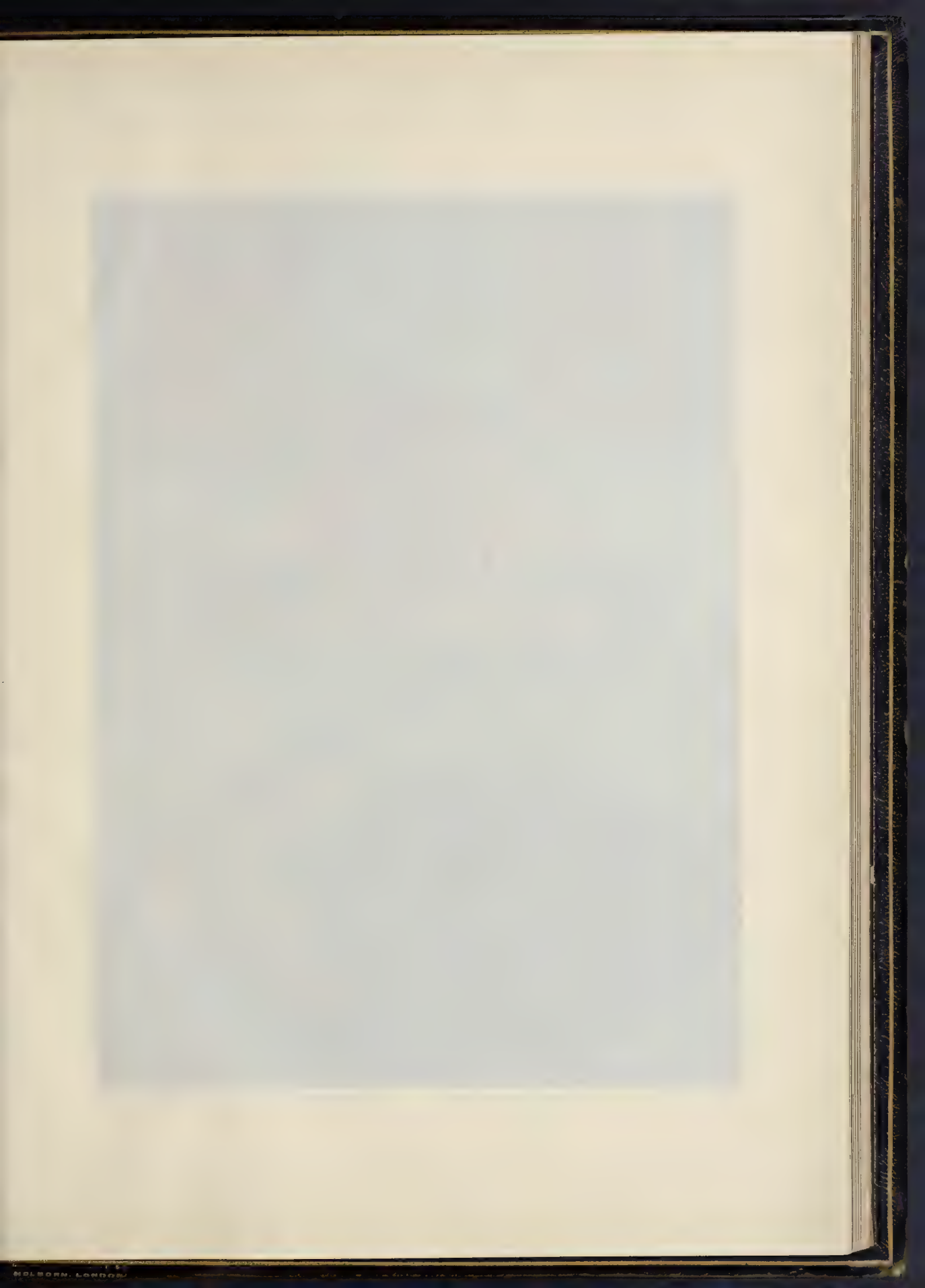
The beautiful decoration which covers the sides of the box almost defies description. It consists of overlapping, cusped medallions of different sizes, but all of similar shape, produced in slight relief and covered with landscapes, flowers, animals, birds, and conventional devices. The grounds of the medallions vary; gold, oxidised silver, dusted and powdered gold, rich aventurine, and imitation grain of wood being the most striking varieties. Upon these the designs are produced in raised gold and coloured lacquers with the greatest spirit, and, in the case of the landscapes, with extreme delicacy of manipulation. The free and irregular disposition of the medallions, thirty-one in number, and the variety, both in colour and treatment, of the thirty-one designs they present, produce a work of ornamental art essentially characteristic of the Japanese artist in his most original mood.

On the inside of the lid are two puppies at play, one in black and silver lacquer and the other in carved ivory; behind them are flowers and grasses, the flowers being in carved ivory and mother-of-pearl.

The inscription and seal present some difficulty. The latter is interpreted *Gō-shō*, but whether that is the name of the artist or not is uncertain. The inscription reads *Tai-kan hi-no-to i go hitsu shiki*, meaning that the brush work was executed in the 24th cyclical year of the period *Tai-kan*. This date is probably fanciful, as there is no *nengō* (period) "*Tai-kan*" in Japanese chronology. It is improbable that allusion is made to the Chinese period, *Ta-kwan*, written in the same characters, for it does not include the 24th cyclical year, and, if it did, would place the date early in the twelfth century. The box is evidently the work of the early part of the present century, and most probably made at Kiōto.

The box measures $11\frac{1}{8}$ inches long, $7\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, and $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches deep.

In the possession of JAMES G. ORCHAR, ESQ., of Broughty Ferry.





SECTION FOURTH.—PLATE V.

LACQUER.



JAPANESE box maker is certainly one of the most ingenious and painstaking of mortals; and the endless variety of forms he adopts for his dainty productions is altogether remarkable. On the present Plate five shapes are given; and Plates II. and III. of this Section furnish five other examples entirely dissimilar.

The illustrations on the Plate now under review are the lids of boxes of fine old lacquer, all different in artistic treatment. The one on the upper portion of the Plate, towards the left, is modelled in likeness to a folded robe of silk and gold brocade. The patterns are brought out with great delicacy in gold lacquer; while the lining of the garment is indicated by vermilion and black. These colours also appear in the narrow strips disposed on the sleeve.

The small lid on the opposite side, although not of an uncommon shape, is of a style of decoration very unusual in lacquer work. The richly coloured pattern which forms the ground has evidently been suggested by cloisonné enamel. The object resembling the sleeve of a robe and the *ume* flowers which are disposed on the rich diapered ground are carefully produced in raised gold lacquer.

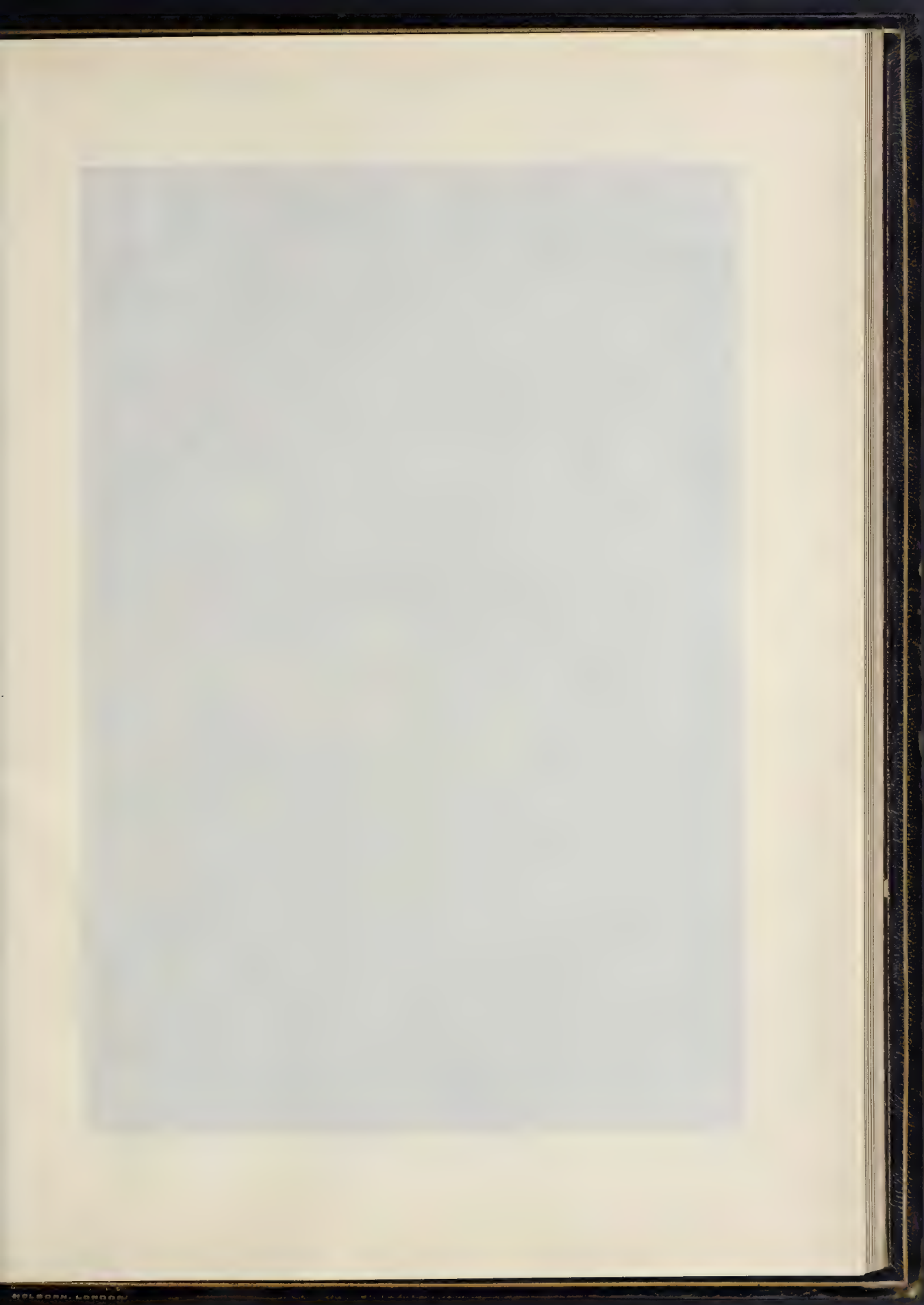
The quaint lid in the centre of the Plate represents the *Takara-bune*, or ship of good fortune, filled with its desirable goods, and above which hovers the crane, the emblem of long life. The whole is rendered in low relief by gold and coloured lacquer.

The lower lid is modelled to represent two lozenge-formed lids overlapping, in the manner very often met with in Japanese works of the class. The under one, only partly shown, is covered with a beautiful floral design and small circular medallions containing birds, executed in gold lacquers of different tones on a black ground. The upper portion, completely shown, is of black lacquer, ornamented with

powdered gold, divided into foreground and clouds, and having the representation of a man tying an ox.

The whole of the objects illustrated are of fine old ware, and are choice cabinet specimens of the lacquer worker's art. They are represented the full size of the originals.

In the possession of W. C. ALEXANDER, ESQ., of London.







SECTION FOURTH.—PLATE VI.

LACQUER.



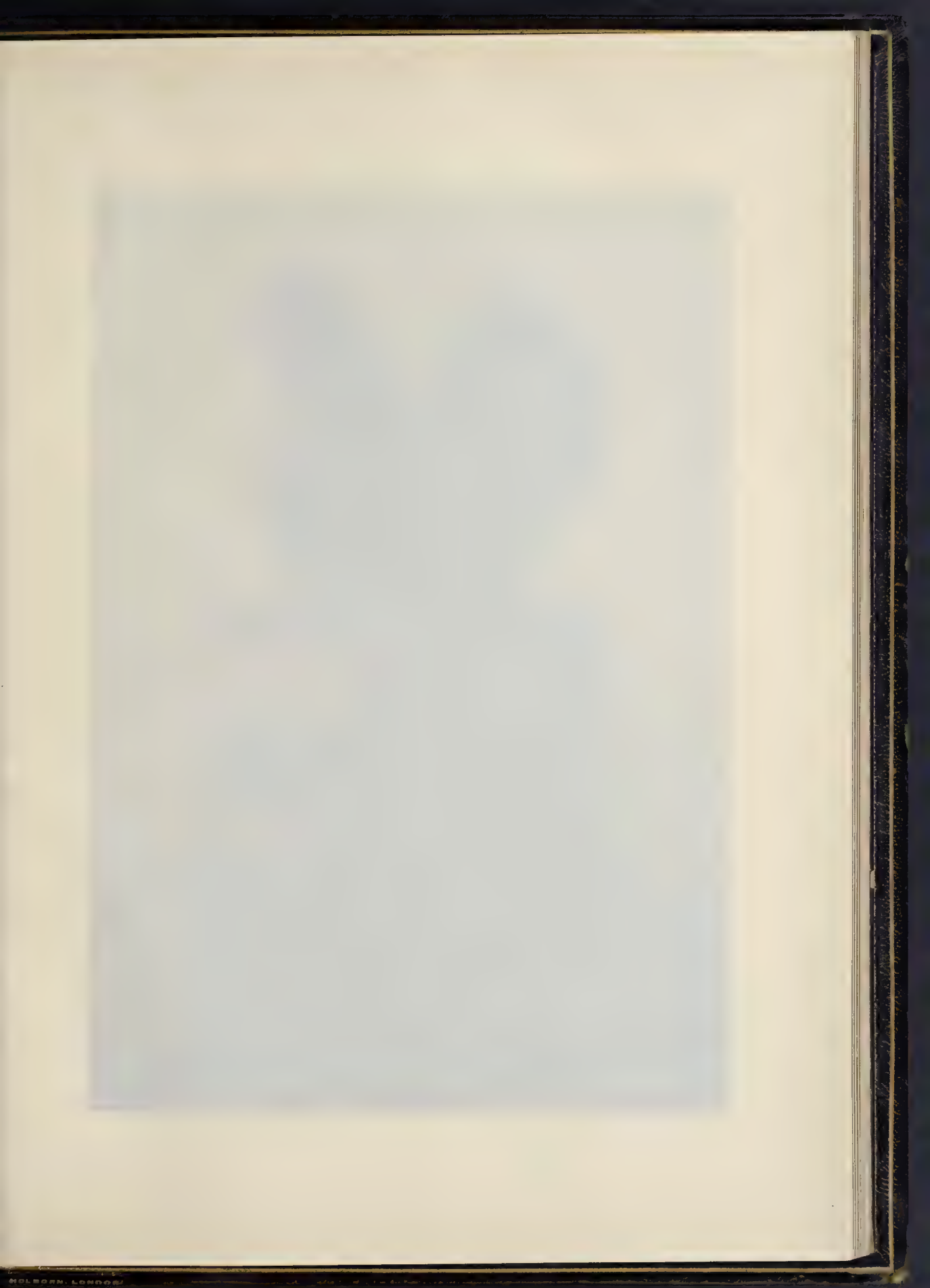
REPRESENTATIONS of the mythical *hōwō* flying above the *kiri* (*Paulownia imperialis*) were great favourites with the old artists of Japan, who doubtless believed in the existence of the fabulous bird, and revered the tree which was not only the most imposing vegetable production before their eyes, but had supplied the leaves and flowers which formed the *Kiri-mon*, or one of the crests of their venerated emperor.

The peculiar form of the *hōwō*, with its numerous flowing tail feathers, rendered it a decorative object which gave almost unlimited scope to the designer. He could with facility dispose the long wings and neck and the pliant tail plumage to suit the form of any object he desired to decorate; and, as may be judged from the present Plate, he seldom failed to produce a graceful and pleasing object.

The article represented on the Plate is the lid of a black lacquer box, chiefly enriched with raised gold lacquer. The sides and ends of the lid are displayed so as to show as much of the design as possible. The remainder of the wing and tail feathers of the bird are upon the sides and ends of the box itself. The beautiful modelling of the different parts of the *hōwō*, and the artistic manner in which several tones of gold and shading are introduced, give the work a rare interest to the decorative artist. All have been most accurately reproduced by the chromolithographic artist and printer. The *kiri* is represented with unusual breadth and freedom.

In the possession of R. PHÉNÉ SPIERS, ESQ., F.S.A., of London.







SECTION FOURTH.—PLATE VII.

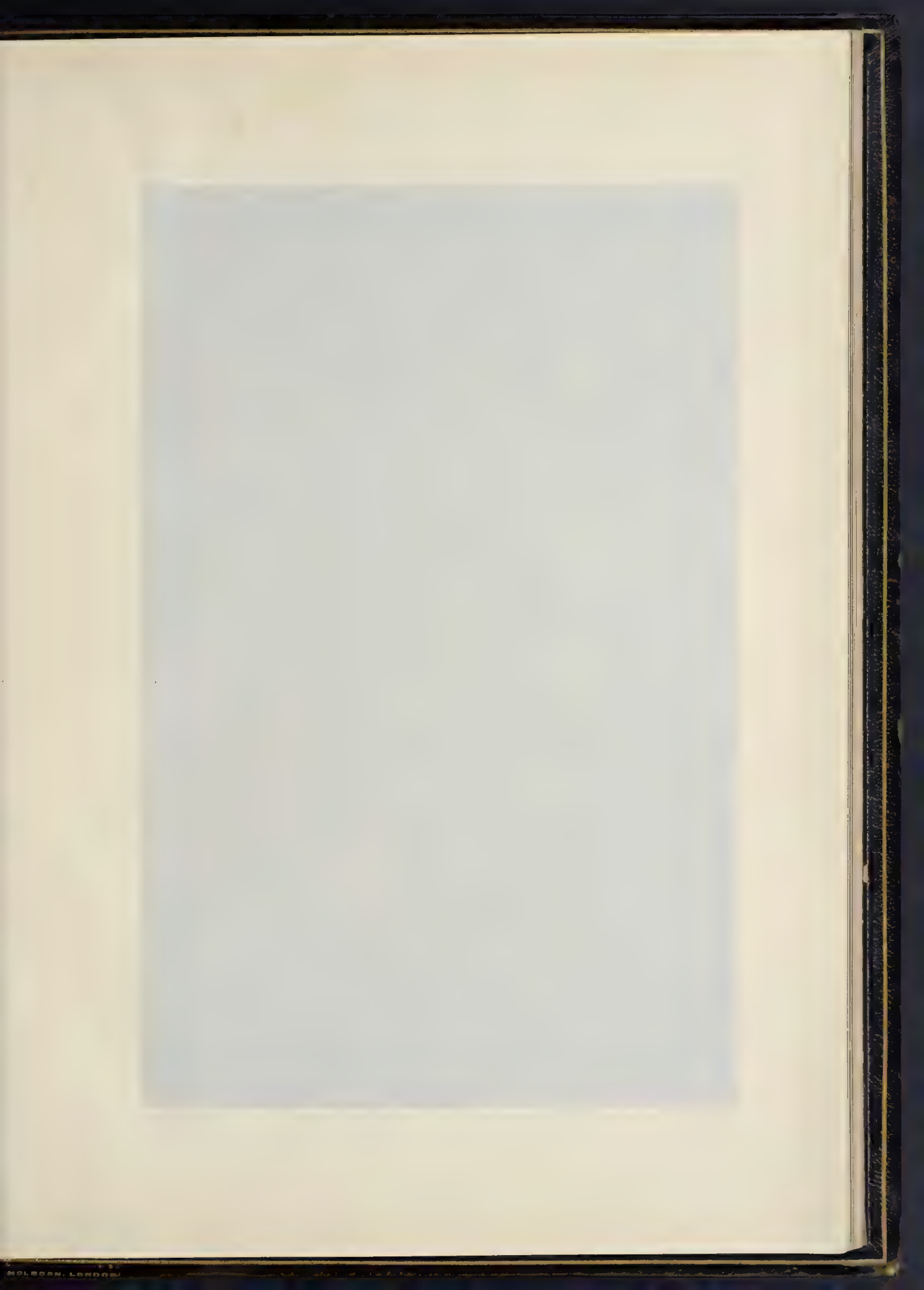
LACQUER.

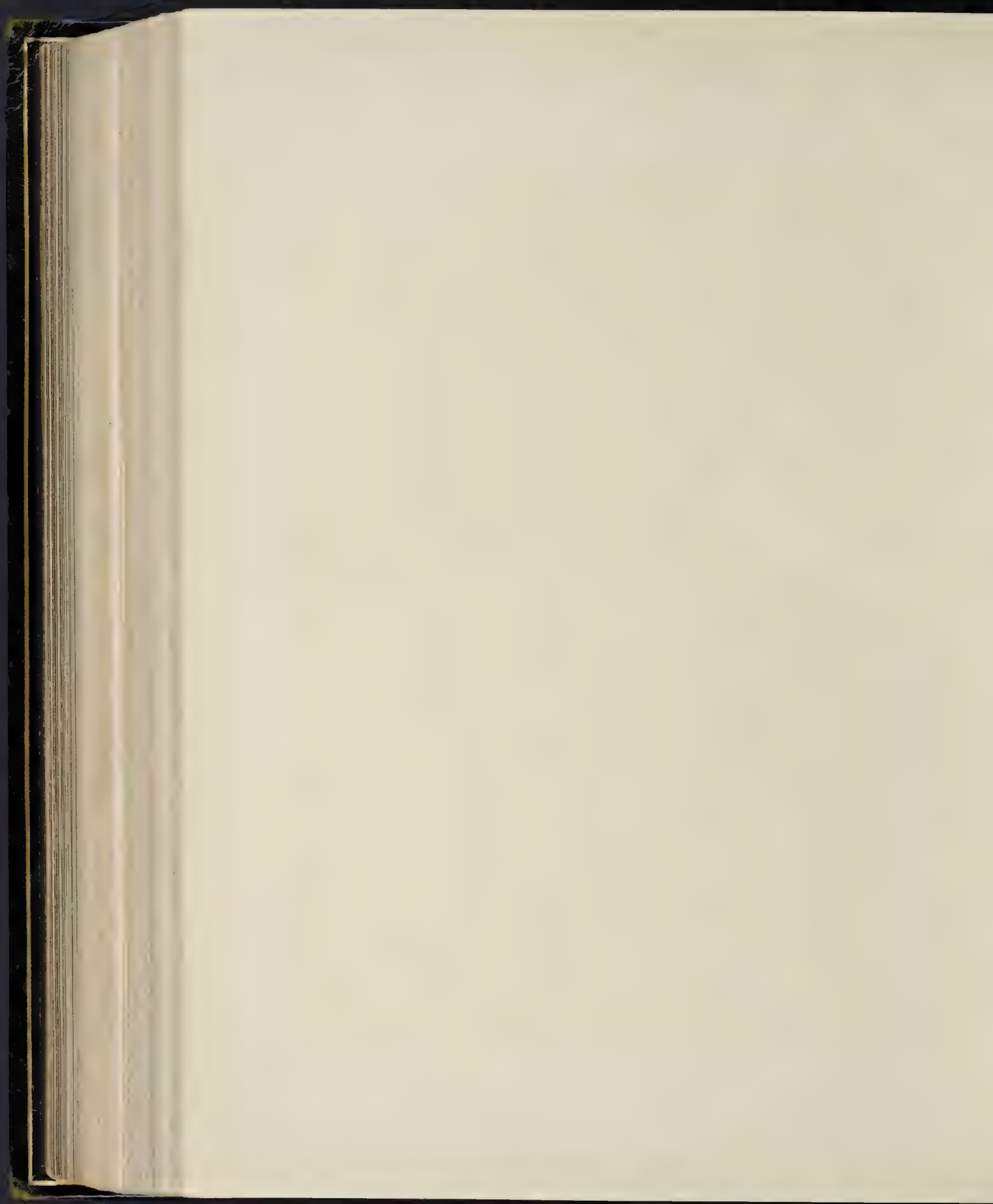


THE variety of forms adopted by the Japanese for their ornamental boxes is truly remarkable. Natural and artificial objects, at all suitable for the purpose, are used as models, and are most cleverly adapted. The article which forms the subject of the present Plate, is a tier of boxes in the form of the favourite Cock and Drum, the origin and significance of which we have already alluded to in the description of Plate I. Section II. The piece under review is of fine quality gold and coloured lacquer. The lower part, representing a drum, is executed, in imitation of the grain of wood, with gold dust differently tinted, as described in the introductory article to this Section. Over the surface is disposed a grape vine, chiefly in gold, but with the grapes and a few of the leaves in a dark metallic lacquer. This portion is cut into three parts, forming two boxes and a lid. The upper portion of the piece is in the form of a cock, most beautifully worked in gold and dark metallic lacquers, with the comb and sides of the head in red lacquer. The modelling and tinting of the plumage are accurately represented in the Plate. The cock forms a small box and lid; and to adapt it to its purpose a condensed and somewhat clumsy treatment of the bird has been found necessary.

This interesting piece is an admirable specimen of the lacquer worker's skill, and is of considerable age. It was in all probability made about the middle of the last century. It measures $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches in height.

In the possession of W. C. ALEXANDER, ESQ., of London.







SECTION FOURTH.—PLATE VIII.

LACQUER.



SMALL tables of beautiful design and execution, such as the one from which the present Plate is taken, have come in considerable numbers from Japan, and now form valued ornaments in European and American collections. These tables are sometimes entirely of fine *nashi-jū* and gold lacquer, minutely wrought with diapers and floral designs, or powdered with the crests of their original princely owners; at others they are of black or coloured lacquer, ornamented with gold patterns, or enriched with beautiful floral sprays. - The table, the top of which is represented in our Plate, is a fine example of the last treatment. The ground is of black lacquer, clouded with patches of dusted gold, and decorated with artistically disposed flowers and foliage, executed, for the most part, in gold and coloured lacquers. Five of the open flowers are in inlaid white mother-of-pearl, as shown in the Plate, while others are in silver foil, now darkly oxidised by age and exposure. Some of the buds have perished, only leaving dark-coloured grounds with thin gold outlines.

The table is of the usual oblong form, supported on four short legs at the corners, and having slightly raised ends. The portion represented is the entire top within these raised portions. It measures $21\frac{1}{2}$ inches by 14 inches.

In the possession of W. C. ALEXANDER, ESQ., of London.





SECTION FOURTH.—PLATE IX.

LACQUER.



SCREENS, formed of panels of various materials supported in stands of carved or lacquered wood, appear to have long been favourite ornaments both in China and Japan. They vary very much in size, ranging from five or six feet square down to a few inches. When of the smallest size they are sometimes modelled in bronze or porcelain, and form suitable *bun-chin*, or paper-weights.

The beautiful piece of work which forms the subject of the present Plate, is a Panel from a small screen, measuring $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches by $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, executed in lacquer with the figure incrusting in ivory.

The subject of the Panel is a celebrated Court lady and poetess of the eleventh century. She was the daughter of the poet SHUNZEI, who lived in the reign of the Emperor ANTOKU. She is said to have been observed by a prince while, rather poorly clad, she was standing in a contemplative mood under an *ume* tree: he was so struck by her beauty that he accosted her in the polite language of the native poets, receiving a reply in the same educated strain. Finding her so highly accomplished he married her. The composition is evidently taken from the design by YŌSAI, which appears in one of the twenty volumes of his *Zenken Kojitsu*, a collection of drawings of notable personages of Japan.

The ground of the Panel is of black lacquer powdered in places with gold flakes, while the mountains are indicated with fine gold dusting, in the manner usual in flat lacquer work. The trunks of the trees are cleverly rendered in raised brown lacquer, imitating bark in the most perfect manner; while the fine branches with the *ume* flowers and buds are executed in raised bright gold lacquer. The foreground is in raised lacquer with the small plants in gold. The figure of the poetess is carved in ivory, slightly stained in certain parts. The entire composition is extremely pleasing and highly characteristic of Japanese art.

In the possession of JAMES S. OGILVIE, ESQ., of Broughty Ferry,





SECTION FOURTH.—PLATE X.

LACQUER.



THE small screen Panel illustrated on the present Plate is a companion to that of the preceding Plate; and is in all essential points of similar manufacture, although a greater variety of materials are introduced in the incrustated figures. The ground is of black lacquer powdered with gold flakes in cloud-like patches; the outline of the mountain being indicated by fine gold dusting skilfully softened off. The trunks of the palms are in raised brown unpolished lacquer; and the foreground is in raised green and black lacquer, with the flowers and small plants in gold and *koban*, all most carefully and minutely worked. The leaves of the palms are similarly treated.

The two incrustated figures are executed in several materials very skilfully carved in low relief. The face and hands of the old *bōdzu* are in ivory, stained; his cloak is of dark brown wood, while the skirt of his under garment is in close-grained wood resembling box in nature and colour; and the white sleeve falling over his right wrist is in mother-of-pearl. His shoes are in dark green pearl; and the basket he carries is carved from a light brown wood. The head of the attendant boy is in stained ivory; his outer garment is of brown wood, covered with transparent lacquer, and ornamented with scrollwork in gold, with a collar of green stained ivory and black lacquer diapered with gold. His girdle and under garment are in white mother-of-pearl; and his shoes are in shaded green pearl.

The entire work is highly characteristic of Japanese art and forms a beautiful specimen of lacquer-work and application combined. Size of Panel $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches by $9\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

In the possession of PROFESSOR J. A. EWING, of Dundee.



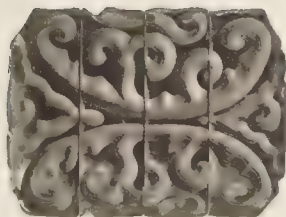
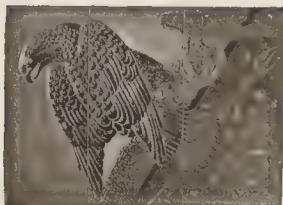


Fig. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.

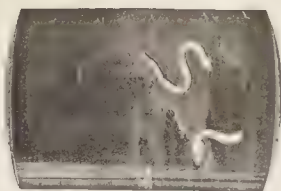


Fig. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20.

SECTION FOURTH.—PLATE XI.

LACQUER.



SEVERAL remarkable specimens of the lacquer characteristic of the great master KÖRIN adorn the Collection from which the objects represented on the present Plate have been selected. KÖRIN's works in lacquer are distinguished by great boldness of conception and remarkable vigour of execution. They stand alone in the entire range of the art, unapproachable in their peculiar class of treatment.

The Panel represented in the centre of the Plate is a fine specimen of this artist's skill. The ground is of a deep green streaked and spotted with red, closely resembling a very plain piece of bloodstone. On this, in low relief, are clouds and water in deep gold and *koban*, the latter much discoloured by age. The bank of the stream is in incrustated lead. On the lower part of the Panel are large iris flowers and leaves; the former being executed with broad margins of richly tinted mother-of-pearl and depressed centres of gold lacquer. The vertical leaves are alternately in lead and gold. The use of lead and tin is one of the most noteworthy characteristics of the Kōrin lacquer and proves how noble even the humblest material becomes in the hands of a great artist. The heliogravure gives an idea of the general handling of this remarkable piece; but no printing process, plain or coloured, could convey a true idea of the beauty and peculiar charm of the original. The Panel was made during the first half of the seventeenth century. The representation is two-thirds the full size.

2.—An *invō*, or medicine box, of fine gold and incrustated lacquer elaborately ornamented with chrysanthemum flowers and grasses. The flowers are executed in raised gold lacquer and incrustated gold foil. Several of the leaves are inserted in the richest crimson and green mother-of-pearl. The general ground is black lacquer. Work of the eighteenth century.

3.—An *inrō* of flat and raised gold lacquer with a snake incrustated in white mother-of-pearl. On the reverse side is another snake twined round the branch of a tree, in raised gold lacquer. The execution throughout is of the highest class.

4.—An *inrō* of flat silver and raised gold and coloured lacquer. The falcon is beautifully modelled while it is, along with the rest of the design, treated in a free and broad manner, giving a highly artistic feeling to the entire work.

5.—An *inrō* of *guri* or laminated lacquer. The colours employed are black, red, green, and yellow laid on in nineteen layers (see text of this Section, page 26). This is a beautiful piece of late seventeenth century workmanship.

In the possession of ERNEST HART, ESQ., M.R.C.S., of London.





SECTION FOURTH.—PLATE XII.

LACQUER.



THE object represented in the present Plate is the lid of a large and beautiful Box of old raised gold lacquer, presented to its present owner by the reigning Mikado.

The design, faithfully reproduced by a photographic process in the Plate, is highly characteristic of old Japanese art in this material.

It represents a tract of land by the sea shore, with temple grounds, rocks, waves, mountains, clouds, trees, and huts, executed with the greatest delicacy in raised gold lacquer and minute metallic incrustation. The treatment of these materials and the manipulation generally are precisely similar to those which characterise all the finer specimens of early Japanese lacquer of the same class.

The sides of the Box are covered with scenes of a corresponding character executed with the same delicacy and care. Taken altogether, this piece is among the finest specimens of the art of the lacquer worker which have left Japan. It contains a complete set of the articles required for an intricate game, once the most favourite amusement of the noble families of Japan. Every article is lacquered and wrought in the most perfect manner, in a style corresponding with the exterior of the Box.

In the possession of L. PRANG, ESQ., of Boston, U.S.A.





Pl. 1. 1. 1.

Pl. 1. 1. 1.

SECTION FOURTH.—PLATE XIII.

LACQUER.



THE object illustrated in the present Plate is the lid of a Lacquer Box, decorated with a design composed of fans, flowers, and grasses, arranged in a manner essentially characteristic of Japanese art. The bold grouping and vigorous handling of the design are indicative of a master-hand, and leave little to be desired in their way.

The general ground of the lid is of black lacquer dusted with gold, producing the clouded effect indicated in the Plate. The central fan, which is open and complete, is in dull red lacquer, clouded with fine gold dust, and worked in slight relief; the side fan—a portion of which only appears on the upper surface of the lid, the rest extending down the side of the box—is in green lacquer, modelled, and dusted with gold in a similar manner; and the partly-opened fan above is in gold lacquer, the surface of which is artistically relieved by what appear to be tarnished patches, which were in all probability intentional on the part of the artist. The Japanese artist has a wise and consistent dislike for tame uniformity, especially in surfaces of considerable dimensions; and his modes of relieving such surfaces are absolutely countless.

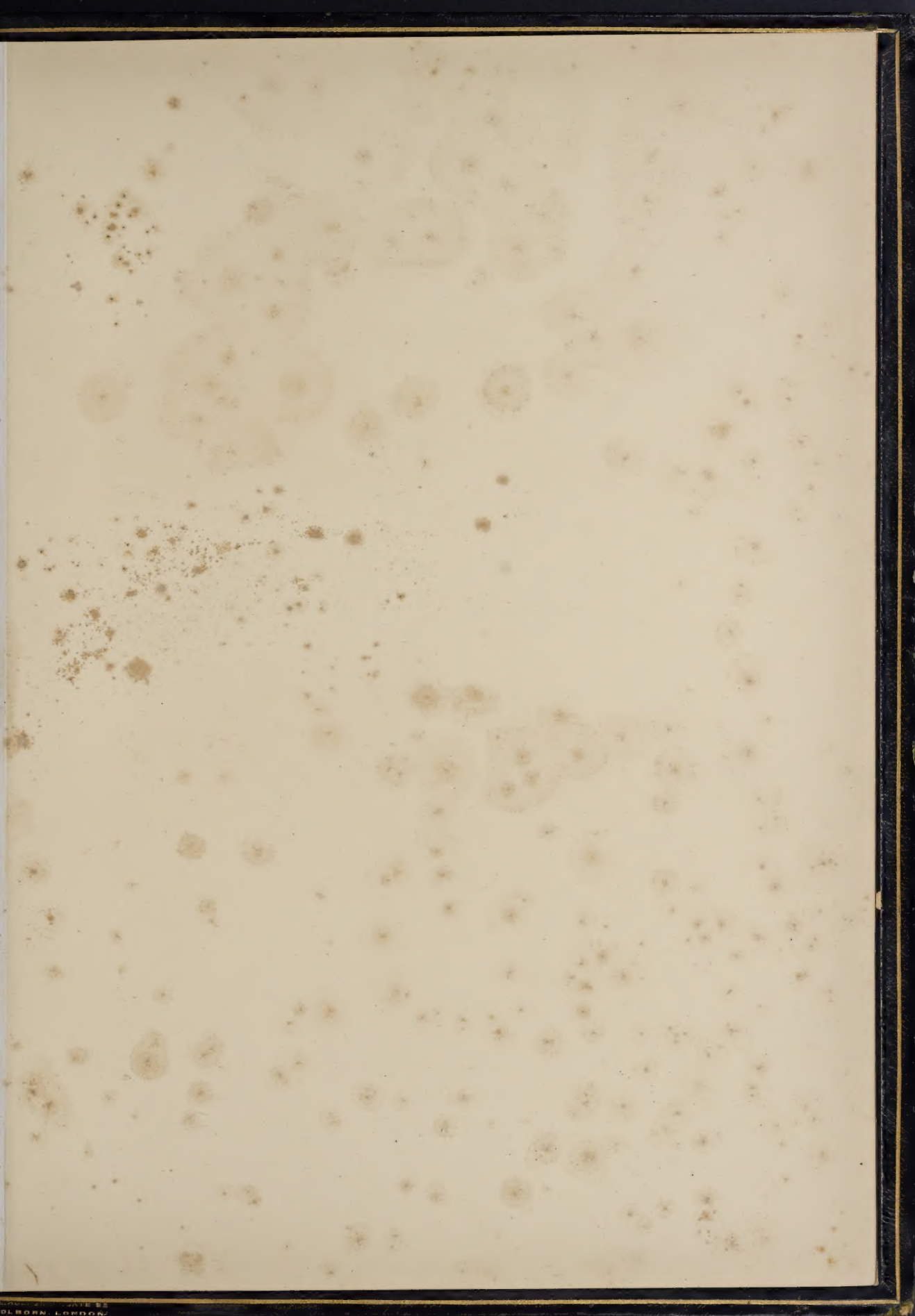
The lily-like flowers at the lower left hand corner are in inlaid opalescent green and purple mother-of-pearl, outlined with gold, while the inflorescence of the other sprays is in gold and a material which glistens, in certain lights, with a deep crimson hue. The leaves are in lacquer of autumnal tints, shaded and dusted with gold powder, and the stems are in tarnished gold. The convolvulus at the right-hand corner has its flowers in mother-of-pearl and oxidised silver. The beautiful bunch of grasses in the upper part of the lid has stems of gold, leaves in dark greens dusted with gold, and the inflorescence in dull red. The

remaining spray, which rises from between the fans, has its masses of buds in brown and bluish grey, and its stems and leaves in gold and green.

The colouring throughout is most refined, notwithstanding the richness which is thrown over it by the introduction of the opalescent mother-of-pearl and the free use of dusted gold.

The lid measures $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches long by 12 inches wide.

In the possession of W. S. BIGELOW, Esq., M.D., of Boston, U.S.A.





SPECIAL 1365-
OVERSIZE 715
V.1

THE GETTY CENTER
LIBRARY

